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A

PACK OF SCRIBBLE.



WRITTEN BY

MEMBERS OF THE INNS OF COURT.



A Christmas Book at Christmas Time.

London:

T. CAUTLEY NEWBY, PUBLISHER,
30, WELBECK STREET, CAVENDISH SQUARE.

1868.

PRICE ONE SHILLING.

250. d. 63.

PREFACE.

This rather new sort of Christmas Book has been got up in a desperate hurry. A week only has been occupied in writing, printing, and advertising. It is only good here and there, but on the whole is probably a great deal better than the majority of publications of the kind. As it is the fashion to observe, this is not "a commercial speculation," but has been written for their amusement by three or four gentlemen of the Temple. A more prepared number will be attempted next year.

A complete innovation has been introduced, in that *not a single advertisement* appears in or about the book. People at Christmas time don't want to be reminded of dyspepsia by a flaring announcement of Swalloway's Pills.

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THE NAME AND HOW WE CHOSE IT.

"A CHAPTER OF AUTOBIOGRAPHY."

How doth it make all prudent readers smile
To find an author noticed by his style;
When everyone, who knows an author, knows
He shifts his style as often as his clothes!

THE occasion was a momentous one. Walker, on whom to the last every man-Jack of us relied, had avowed the day before it was no good depending upon *him*. We had given up looking to Thompson, who (it was notorious) had for three days possessed upon the subject only a single idea. The name, he declared, must be "Foolascrapiana;" but as, when called upon to give a reason, he was completely unable to do so, we had all acquired the habit of passing over Thompson's suggestion with an attentive and amiable smile. Smith was of more use; he had plenty of ideas. One, which he threw off in a happy moment, was that we should call it the "Nautilus," which we thought a pretty name enough until Smith urged in its behalf that it was likewise prophetic, as we should certainly have to "shell out." That upset the Nautilus. Then he proposed to us "The Rostrum," and suggested we should justify the title by preparing a police story, and filling a few dozen pages with the different varieties of "Beak!" Finding our friend in cue, we allowed him to proceed. But Smith took a mean disadvantage. We will call it "My Gift-Horse's Mouth," said Smith, after the style of a Book of the Decretals, speaking in its best manner. Of course, everybody asked the reason. Because it won't bear looking into, tittered our malapert coadjutor.

After this, it was agreed that Smith was dreadfully weedy—indeed, altogether a failure; and, as the standard of intellect was just then evidently low, we arranged a meet-

ing for the next day, when the name should be determined on in conclave.

We met in the well-known chambers. Tumblers and tea-spoons, Mrs. Darkin, please; and bring in some lemonade and soda-water. Now then.

Well, look here; *I* think we ought to give it some name that will make people buy, began Wiselaw. Wiselaw obtained universal assent.

Then let us call it "The Gladstone," said the insufferable Glenrose, lobby-haunter and enthusiast.

And make the price one Dizzy, suggested Wiselaw.

How do we propose to connect the stories? asked Thompson. Get one name with a lot of different meanings, "Fast" for instance.

We commended Thompson for his acquaintance with Mr. Beeton's publications.

That is not a bad idea, though, he insisted. Make one man have no dinner, and fast on Christmas day; another snowed up, and stuck fast; and for a third illustration, we can put in a faithful description of Mr. Walker's company and manners.

We smiled at Walker. Bosh! said the great man. But keep a chronicle of these ideas, or we shall be forgetting half the suggestions.

Glenrose was equipped with a pencil.

Not that Thompson's few notions are in the least likely to be over-looked; as his stock is small, we are pretty sure to have it re-exhibited.

We ought to try and give the thing a special and peculiar interest, said Smith, *redivivus*.

That is exactly what we have done. We're going to say, "written by some Members of the Inns of Court."

Do you know I am not sure it would not be better to say, "Five Gentlemen of the Jewish Persuasion."

We paid this sally of Smith's the tribute of a general grin.

My dear fellow, it would be bought up by the whole people. We could make it up to a hundred pages, and call it "Shent-per-Shent." The sale would be terrific, and we could have a special agent in Houndsditch!

But we should have to make a deduction of a ruinous discount for the trade. A good idea, sir; go on, your performance has been very tolerable.

Call it "Gin-bottle Anecdotes," suggested Walker, as he stretched a long arm to the spirit-case.

No, no! We will avoid a *general* title. That is a name which would describe too many of the regular story-books.

I was thinking—— began Thompson.

That is very creditable, said Smith.

Well, then; why not give it a legal name at once? Say "Coke," and begin with a blazing leader on the Yule Log and Christmas in the Olden Time.

A look of horror was depicted on the faces of the company.

NO! screamed Glenrose, losing his pencil and his temper on the spot. We will *not* have a Yule Log. If we do, I'll be out of it altogether.

We pacified him, and assured Glenrose that not a word about the Yule Log should be inserted.

"Coke" is not so very bad though. Try "Coke—a Little Ton."

"Not understood of the vulgar," said Wiselaw; besides, a legal title won't do for a gift-book.

Oh, yes; the very thing. "Know all men, *buy* these presents."

Did you see that thing called 'Amateurs,' in last week's "Tomahawk?"

Their 'Brown Study' did for me, sir; I have never bought a number since—I would not give even two-pence to support systematic disloyalty.

Yes, I believe that cartoon was a crusher; but they have been cringing like curs lately to make up for it.

Whenever they could find room. You forget two numbers a month are preserved for the French Emperor.

Yes! *What does it mean?*

No one knows; Serjeant Glover over again, I should'n't wonder.

Well, the "Tomahawk" is very witty, at the expense of all amateur writers. The article is headed 'By an Ex-amateur on two feet.'

Splendid! Fancy their at last getting an article from some one who can produce evidence of having been at school!

What sort of thing is it?

Every line Geneva, as usual. It is a close run for Biggest Blackguard between "Tomahawk" and "Illustrated Police News."

Well, let us get away from this sink. What do you say to "Bar Sells?"

A good name, sir; only it doesn't quite suit the book.

Stuff! ejaculated Glenrose.

"Stuff," be it, chorussed the others. Poor Thompson was temporarily silenced.

"Stuff" appeared good, decidedly; conveying a playful depreciation of our labours, and bearing a genial reference to the forensic costume.

But *that* would'n't be quite accurate, because—

We saw that "Stuff" would *not* be quite accurate.

Then we may as well call it "SCRIBBLE!" said Smith.

Something "OF SCRIBBLE!" said Glenrose.

"A PACK OF SCRIBBLE!!!" said Wiselaw.

Thompson upset his tumbler, and declared for the last suggestion.



DOING A DUN.

AN ACTABLE FARCE, IN ONE SCENE FOR GENTLEMEN CHARACTERS ALONE.

SCENE—SOME CHAMBERS IN LONDON.

CHARACTERS :

MR. FRED. WITTINGTON—a young gentleman, of dashing manners.

MR. MUFF—a mild young person.

MR. JOSIAH PEACEBRIGHT—a tradesman, of unblemished repute and urgent disposition.

WILKINS—Wittington's servant, a very impudent young man.

OBSERVATIONS.

Whittington must be dressed as a swell, the more extravagantly the better. Mr. Muff all in light clothes, and with a white hat. Peacebright should have no collar, and wear a black necktie; he must put on a harsh, strident voice (a Scotchman will act this part best). Wilkins must wear a livery, and part of the time keep his hat (with a silver band on it) on his head. This is a trick which always pays with a private audience.

. If there is a choice of parts, give *Wilkins* to a man who has acted before. He never leaves the stage, and should know how to face the people.

. It is quite unnecessary in a slight farce such as this, to insist on verbal accuracy in the parts.

The following matters should be carefully arranged before beginning :—

1.—FURNITURE.—A *small* table in the middle of the room; a larger one, bearing an *escritoire*, or large desk, at one side; this must be crammed with papers, and made-up bills, &c., of all kinds. Have a few pictures about the room; but, as all men who live in chambers do not fence, box, and hunt, it is *not* absolutely essential (as on the stage) to have foils, gloves, riding-whips, and foxes' heads on every wall. A pewter pot looks more real, and a good many newspapers and stray books should be about. Most of the chairs must be easy-chairs, and the room should be arranged to look comfortable.

2.—REMAINING PROPERTIES.—The bills just mentioned must be written out roughly, and made very long, by pasting strip to strip. The letter to be brought by MR. MUFF, should be written, and sealed elaborately.

The costumes have been already described.

3.—OTHER MATTERS.—All that remains to be attended to is to manage the “exits and entrances;” some one who understands this should stand at the side-door (if there is one), and direct the inexperienced. No fear need be entertained that he will be overheard; he may all but shout to the actors, and the audience won't notice him; but the players should be warned to look to him, when in doubt, to save the necessity for this. The proper *knocks* have also to be seen to.

DOING A DUN.

AN ACTABLE FARCE, IN ONE SCENE.
FOR GENTLEMEN CHARACTERS ALONE.

SCENE—SOME CHAMBERS IN LONDON.

Enter WITTINGTON, dressed to go out, followed by WILKINS.]

WITTINGTON. Nonsense, I tell you you *must* keep him out. What else do I pay you for, I should like to know? If you let in Peacebright, or any others of that lot, you shall go at once.

WILKINS. Yes, sir; always quite willing to oblige, sir, I'm sure; a month's warning, *or* a month's——

WITT. (*interrupts*) I know your impudence! Now you know what you're to do? Go to Padmore, and tell him to bring that bay horse at 11 to-morrow; and then go and order two dozen of Allsop at Porter's, and tell him to put it down.

WILK. I don't think as he will again, sir. He was very difficult, and—unreasonable, sir, the last time. I think he might send a half-dozen, sir.

WITT. Half-a-dozen won't do, so try Perry again; he'll do it. I've only had his bill in a year. He'll send in six dozen! Oh, yes; order six dozen of Allsop from Perry.

WILK. Yes, sir; and am I to *call on* Mr. Peacebright? I promised to give you his message, and told him I would be sure to call and pay him something this morning.

WITT. No; don't go near him. I hate that Peacebright; he is the biggest swindler I ever dealt with. (*Going; returns to speak to WILKINS, who, directly WITT.'s back was turned, had thrown himself into an easy-chair, with a shrug of his shoulders, and begun to help himself to some sherry. WILK. rises hurriedly.*) Get up, sir; how dare you sit down here!

And my Amontillado, too ! (*aside*) I really hardly dare row the fellow, because I owe him ten month's wages. (*Aloud*). Wilkins !

WILK. Sir ?

WITT. Put the wine away.

WILK. Yes, sir (*puts it away*).

WITT. Wilkins, I expect a very important letter to-day ; one with a foreign postmark. If it comes, put it into that vase on the mantel-piece, and I shall find it if I come in late.

WILK. Yes, sir ; is there anything else, sir (*beginning to turn coolly to the chair again before WITT. leaves*).

WITT. Yes, there is ; go to Greenwich observatory and find out what the time is ! My watch isn't quite right !

[*Exit WITTINGTON.*]

WILK. (*laughs as he goes to sideboard and gets out wine again*). His watch isn't quite right ! I don't think he's quite right himself. His watch ! Why, to my certain knowledge that ridic'lous old hunter has been popped at Mr. Attenborough's for five months ; and I'll engage it is all right, for they knows how to keep a watch at those places when they get it. Oh ! I can find *the ticket*. (*Turns to escritoire*). Let us see, is that partic'lar ticket in the top drawer or the bottom ? Oh, ah ! the bottom. Where's his keys ? where on earth are his keys ? (*looks about for them*). Oh, never mind, where are my keys ? They'll do just as well every bit (*produces keys from his pocket*). Now, which key is it for that ridic'lous bottom drawer (*tries them ; opens the drawer, A quantity of papers burst out*). Bills ! Bills ! Bills ! (*Examines them*). Oh ! my goodness ; whose are these ? (*Snatches at one*). That's old Peacebright's fist, I'll be bound (*unrolls it*). That Peacebright (*meditates*) is a peculiar person. It's very few tradesmen who supply such a variety of articles ! He is in a large way of business, Mr. Peacebright ! Oh, ho ! (*suddenly laughs at something in the bill*) :—

	£	s.	d.
To cleaning your windows	...	0	9 6
To a pair of dancing pumps	...	0	17 0
Three weeks' feed for y'r horse	...	4	10 0
3lbs. Angola tea	...	1	1 0
Do. do. best Congou wool	...	2	12 6
A dozen watering-pots	...	5	1 5

	£	s.	d.
Two reams best cream laid note ...	0	15	0
Byron's Works, illustrated ...	2	2	0
Shirt collars, new fashion, illustrated, ½ dozen ...	0	17	0
Illustrated! That means those he's got with a horse's head on them; a illustrated shirt collar! [<i>continues.</i>]			
A pair of horse-pistols ...	57	0	0
Two best feather-beds and one portrait* by Canaletti, an odd lot ...	49	7	0
[A very odd lot!]			
Seven bills of exchange overdue this date (Dec. 25th) and interest	561	3	4

WILK. (*continues.*) What sort of a man is old Peacebright, now, I wonder? (*Examines head of bill.*) Oh! "Josiah Peacebright, Agent and General Dealer." I'd general deal him; he's an old screw and a reg'lar hard-hearted—that Peacebright.—Didn't he say he expected a foreign letter? A foreign letter! (*shakes his head.*) No! I don't believe in remittances from abroad; I've heard him say that so often. Well, Mr. Wittington, Esquire, is in a very bad fix for money, as I believe; and if he don't get some, and pay me my eleven months' wages, I must leave him, though he be a good fellow. (*Helps himself to sherry.*) Oh! he's a good fellow; he has a very good idea of wine, now, has Mister Fred. Not what you'd call (*sips*) a right, slap-up taste, you know, but (*sips*) still passable for such a young gentleman—very. (*A loud and long-continued knock heard outside.*) (*Calls.*) Halloa! Go away, now, Mary; I'm not coming to you. That young person is getting too free! She is always coming here with a message or something from the gentleman down stairs; I know what she's after; she's after me. I don't encourage her. (*Lounges and assumes a self-satisfied expression.*) (*Another very loud knock.*) Oh! hang the girl! Well, another glass, at all events, first. (*Drinks.*) Now then, Polly; but I won't have you make too free. She don't usually knock so fierce as that, though. (*A third knock as WILK. leaves the room. He returns immediately with MR. PEACEBRIGHT.*)

PEACEBRIGHT. Don't tell me; he is in London. I don't believe you. I say I don't believe you.

* This list may be increased and improved to any extent with little trouble.

WILK. Hasn't been near here for a month, sir, I assure you; not expected for six weeks yet; is spending Christmas with his relatives in Coventry.

PEA. I don't believe it. (*Aside.*) Most unfortunate thing. I really have never seen this young man. All business has been done through—(*aloud.*) He is in town, sir; he passed my shop this morning.

WILK. Did he? (*Aside.*) Not he. Mr. Fred is a *very* great deal too sharp to go near Grinder's Buildings in the present state of the money market. (*Aloud.*) Hallo! sir.

PEA. Young man, how can you serve such a master?

WILK. How can *you* have dealings with such a gent? If I was you, I would close my accounts with him, and never come near his chambers any more.

PEA. Don't trifle with me, young man! My reputation is at stake. I have large payments to make. I am in want of money. I want to be paid; I will be paid.

WILK. But, look here, sir, don't get angry. Mr. Fred doesn't pay anybody. I am a creditor of Mr. Fred's, I am. I don't lose my temper. No; I'd grind my fingers to the bone to serve him!

PEA. (*seats himself.*) Now, young man, listen to me. I am a person respected in my position; the breath of calumny has never touched me (*he touches WILK., who rubs himself, and goes further off. By-play*). And, young man, I would not for the world suffer anything to happen which should hold me up to the public scorn—

WILK. Scorn—nonsense! I am not a public scorn, and he doesn't pay me.

PEA. (*rising excitedly.*) Enough of this. I must and will be paid. I'll not leave these chambers till I have my money, if I have to dine and sleep here (*WILK. stares.*) Oh! I've got my sandwiches (*produces a paper of them, and begins to eat*), and my—oh! (*puts back a pocket flask, as he sees decanter on the table, and makes a step towards it.*)

WILK. No, you don't!

PEA. (*retires hurriedly.*) Young man, I am athirst; and if your master can afford a costly wine, whilst I to whom he owes a thousand pounds am compelled to drink thin whiskey and water—

WILK. My master can't afford it! That's *my* sherry; I take it medicinally! Don't you think you had better go, now, Mr. Peacebright? I'll be sure to give your little message, and (*taking bill PEA. holds in his hand, and unfold-*

ing it) will leave your little account (*holds it up*) on his dressing-table.

PEA. No, young man, I will not leave. Here I stay.

WILK. Then go and wait in the pantry, sir, if you please. Master likes everybody to wait in the pantry. (*aside.*) There ain't a fire in that ridic'lous pantry. (*aloud.*) It's a comfortable room, sir; and there is a domestic library over the dresser, and a file of "Lloyd's Weekly News" from its commencement!

PEA. Yes, young man, I will wait; and directly your master comes in I will see him. Be sure you tell him. He shall not escape me now.

[*Exit.*]

WILK. What an out-and-out ridic'lous person Peacebright is when he is angry! His reputation, too! I never knew he had one, except for making as much as ever he could out of every bargain he ever made. And wanting to take the sherry, too. No; I take it—medicinally (*helps himself and sits down.* A timid knock is heard outside.) That is Mary. No, Mary, not when Mr. Peacebright is in the pantry; this won't do. She will think I am out, I will let her go away (*two more timid knocks*). Oh, well, I can't let her in anyhow.

[*Exit.*]

He is heard to open a door outside.]

MR. MUFF (*outside*). Can you inform me, sir, if Mr. Frederick Wittington is at home?

WILK. (*outside*). No, young gentleman, he is not; you can walk in, sir, if you please, though.

Enter MUFF and WILKINS.]

MUFF. I have brought a letter of introduction, sir, to Mr. Wittington, from the Reverend Dr. Legrange, of Blenkiron Park. It is addressed to Mr. Wittington, but I am quite sure, if *you* read it, sir, it will be sufficient.

WILK. Me? Oh, certainly; I am Mr. Wittington's private secretary.

MUFF *hands him a large letter.* WILK. *opens it.*]

Take a seat, if you please, sir! Take a seat!

MUFF *is very ill at ease all through this interview, but seats himself with apparent comfort in an easy chair. He looks round the room, and pulls out some spectacles, and peers at the ceiling and pictures.*]

WILK. Well, this isn't bad. (*Reads some of the letter to*

himself.) Oh, very good, indeed—very good. (*Reads patronisingly.*)

“Dumbledore Rectory,
“Dec. 8, 1868.

“MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,—

“My late pupil, Mr. Muff, a gentleman inexperienced in the ways of the world [‘Pretty dear!’] has occasion to come to London on private business. From my knowledge of your character and disposition, I know I cannot do better than give him this recommendation to you. [‘Oh! my goodness me!’].

“You will find him intelligent [‘Who could have thought it?’] and not altogether unamusing [‘Ha! he! he’s right there!’] and I trust you will show him about London. The British Museum he will take a great interest in, having a desire to view the Honolulu manuscripts, discovered B.C. 29. [‘Oh! bother the Honour Loo manuscripts!’]

“I recommend him to your especial care. Hoping soon to hear of your professional advancement [‘34 per cent. is about *his* professional advancement!’]

“I remain,

“Ever your affectionate old preceptor,

“T. PHILEMON BRIDGES.”

Well, sir, I think you had better not wait till Mr. Fred. returns. He is occupied at social meetings of the other rising young men of the day, sometimes until quite late in the evening, sir.

MUFF. Yes; no doubt he takes a great interest in all social science questions.

WILK. (*deliberates he; takes no notice of this remark.*) I declare I think I’ve hit it! Mr. Muff, may I ask you to wait a minute here, sir? I think I may find out when my master is likely to return. (*Aside.*) I’ve got it; I’ll bring in that curmudgeon Peacebright, and have some fun! I shouldn’t wonder if he took this young gentleman for Mr. Fred!

[*Exit.*

MUFF (*solus*). Ah! London is a pleasant place. I have been to see the principal public buildings. I was conducted down Gray’s Inn Road only this afternoon; there I saw the mansions of the aristocracy of the Metropolis, the

warehouses of the great merchants, and the thriving happy peasantry. Yet, there was an air of bustle and noise about the place which the great people must rather dislike sometimes, one would think. Yet, London is a fine place—a fine place.

[*Re-enter WILK., accompanied by PEA.*]

PEA. (*addresses MUFF with suppressed rage*). And so, sir, you have come here at last, sir; and now what will you pay?

[*MUFF looks bewildered.*]

What will you pay, sir? I ask, and I think I am entitled to ask, sir, when you recollect that my bill is of very long standing, sir.

WILK. By George; his bill is very long any way!

PEA. (*exultant*). Then, young man, you agree with me?

WILK. Agree with you! You look as if you'd taken something that didn't!

MUFF (*mildly*). Sir; I don't know you.

PEA. (*getting more excited*). No; but I know you. What will you pay, I say? what will you pay?

MUFF (*still bewildered*). What I'll pay; oh! I pay? What do you mean?

PEA. (*fairly wroth*). How dare you, sir, be guilty of this dissimulation? Yes, I say how *dare* you thus to repudiate to my face the honest claims of an industrious and deluded tradesman? Know, sir, that as sure as there is law to be had, I will make you suffer for this. *My* reputation shall not be lost through the swindling of a crafty stripling.

MUFF. Crafty stripling!

PEA. (*more and more wild*). Yes; stripling! I suppose you don't expect me to call you a man! Now, once for all, will you pay?

MUFF. Pay? No; I never saw you in my life!

PEA. Then, I tell you what it is, you swindler of honest tradesmen, you crafty stripling that deludes an industrious and hardworking creditor, if you won't pay in one way you shall in another! I'll smash your furniture, and I'll pummell you black and blue!

[*MUFF walks behind his chair.*]

No, sir, you shall not escape (*advances on him*). You will not find a protection from the uplifted arm of an injured man! (*Strikes MUFF, who falls on the floor*).

WILK. (*who has been all the time urging on PEA. and indulging in many expressions of delight at the success of his*

manœuvre). Now, Mr. Peacebright, you *have* done it, sir! (*assists MUFF to rise and MUFF pants*). Do you know who this gentleman is that you have been bullying and threatening and beating here, sir? Now answer me that; I should like to know—

PEA. I have beaten a dishonest stripling—

MUFF. Dishonest stripling! Sir, insult to injury such as you have inflicted (*rubs his head*) is, indeed, but a trifling addition; but I tell you what it is, I am going at once to fetch a policeman!

WILK. That's right, sir: do, Mr. Muff, sir, do; I'll keep the ruffian in hand (*spars at PEA.*)

PEA. (*amazed*). Mr. Muff! Who is Mr. Muff? Oh! I have made some dreadful mistake!

WILK. That you have, governor. You never spoke a truer word in your life. *We* ain't going to make a mistake; *we* know where to find a policeman in a second. (*to MUFF*) At the corner of Brick Court, sir, you'll find—

PEA. Oh, sir (*humbly to MUFF*), spare me this degradation—I am an injured man. What I have done I am sorry for. I acted under the influence of excitement.

MUFF (*very confident*). You did, sir; and now you are about to be punished for it.

WILK. Yes, we'll pepper him.

PEA. Oh, sir, I implore you to have pity on me; I shall lose my reputation. Indeed, sir, I shall lose my reputation.

MUFF (*sententiously*). Sir, I think that to part with that must be the most fortunate thing that could possibly befall you!

PEA. Oh, sir; again I say have pity. I will do anything you ask, rather than incur a loss of my reputation. Ask me to do anything, sir, and I (*kneels to MUFF*) will do it rather than incur this dreadful thing.

WILK. Well, now, that is coming to terms! Go on, Mr. Peacebright!

PEA. I am willing to do anything you ask if you will overlook this unfortunate affair.

WILK. (*looks significantly at MUFF.*) Then I have no doubt this can be arranged. Mr. Muff is a close friend of Mr. Wittington, and will not treat you harshly, I dare say. —Now, come to this table, Mr. Peacebright, and write as I tell you. You are to promise never to dun Mr. Fred for six months—do you hear? Come here, sir (*leads him to the table*). Write—"I promise:" now, go on. (PEA. *ruefully*

but submissively obeys. A paper is written out.) Now I think Mr. Peacebright may go; may he not, Mr. Muff? You will, no doubt, excuse him now?

MUFF. I will. I overlook all.

[*Exit PEA., taking all his bills with him. He bows himself out.*

WILK. Now, sir, I should say Mr. Fred. will soon be in. I think to-day he has only gone to walk in the park. I should wonder (*a knock is heard*) if that was him. (*Exit and re-enters, bringing a letter*). No! it's that foreign letter Mr. Fred. expected.

[*Another knock Exit WILK., re-enter with WITT.; does not notice MUFF.*

WITT. I passed the postman on the stairs; he brought a letter for me. Where is it?

WILK. Here, sir. (*produces it.*)

WITT. (*Opens it eagerly.*) Hurrah! I've won!

MUFF and WILK. What?

WITT. The lottery prize, £1,500! I'll pay Peacebright, I'll pay everybody.

WILK. No, sir; we've paid Peacebright.

WITT. How?

WILK. Look here.

WITT. *reads the paper, and then MUFF's letter of introduction. He thanks MUFF for his share in the matter, and takes him out to dinner. WILK. is left to make a comic finish.*

[*Exeunt omnes.*





A COLD SWIM.

MY TRUE STORY OF THE TEMPLE PIER.

HAVE you ever enjoyed a swim in the Thames? Of course you have, many times. Somewhere between Richmond and Twickenham, or perhaps at Shepperton, you were to be found with wringing locks, and no parting to speak of, ever so often only this summer. And a very capital way of spending the cool evening hour it is, to plunge, regardless of conventionalities, into the running stream; and mightily refreshing, too. And if, when you come out, you do find nettles the only things to dry yourself upon, why—at least, they promote a healthy sensation of warmth, and furnish, one would surely expect, a reliable prophylactic against cold. What if a roll in a nettle-bed were some day recognised as an expedient preferable to rubbing, and duly find a place among the recipes of the Royal Humane Society for those requiring a fillip *in extremis*?

It is no doubt a healthy and exhilarating exercise, that swim in the river; going easily down stream, perhaps followed by a boat, and being towed lazily up again to repeat the trip. But I was going to tell you of a swim I took in the Thames not so very long ago, which, before it was over, lost some of its exhilarating character; and, for health, well, I will say, had it lasted only a little longer, I should never, I quite believe, have troubled my doctor again.

In a certain November, namely, that of the present year of grace, my friend P—— and myself took a walk down the Thames Embankment after dinner. We were both on our way from —— Inn; he was to cross the water at one of the bridges, bound for Putney or some other suburbs in the same direction, whilst I, more aristocratic and less of a pedestrian, proposed to take a cab at the first outlet for my club in Jacobus Square.

It was by this time nine o'clock; the day happened actually to be the historic old fifth of November.

There were very few guys this year. At all events, P—— and I had not seen any, and we remarked to one another on the decline of popular taste, augured by this unwonted circumstance. P——, who is a politician, was inclined to attribute it to the Irish Church Question, premising that Mr. Gladstone and the Roman Catholics had raised objections to the periodical witticisms at the expense of the great disestablisher. To me, on the other hand, it appeared that the guy trade was falling off simply in consequence of the many more lucrative vocations "opening up" (as the penny-a-liners say) to youthful enterprise. What! when the profession of cigar lights employs so many thousands of children and (we must suppose) brings such a profit that parents find it pay them to keep them at it; when the distribution of knowledge by the penny papers—the sale of more than one half of which is in London effected by street boys—affords a regular and recognised field for their industry, do you expect a business boy to waste his time and talents in the flashy greatness and dubious investments of the guy trade? Psha! Besides, sentiment has gone from London for good. It is all very well in the country, where they not only say "Holloa, boys," but still do "let the bells ring," when the day of the nation's grand escape comes round; but in London! a guy? Psha! again. Move on.

There had been no guys. P—— and myself (artless creatures both) soon turned from this subject to the kindred affairs of bonfires, fireworks, and the rest; and then we naturally turned our eyes towards Westminster, the scene of the grand old history. The clock tower could just be discerned (it seemed to be on the Surrey side from where we stood) and we could just mark the course of the river, how it wound and glided serpent-wise between the Temple and Westminster Bridge.

"Isn't it absurdly still and dark, P——?" said I, as we leaned over the new embankment wall. "I declare you wouldn't know there was water flowing in front of us at all."

"There are some oars going, at all events," he replied. "Oh, yes; they are landing from that great barge. You can see that it's water now."

"Yes, so you can," said I. "They seem to be coming to the steps."

We were standing close to the new Temple Pier (still shut in by a hoarding, and not open for public use), and the steps were on our left below us. The boat came as we expected, and in a minute three men had left her, and having got over the hoarding, passed close to us—they had fastened their boat at the steps.

"Doesn't the water look jolly?" said I to P——. "I wonder if anyone ever bathed from here?"

"Of course, my dear fellow," answered he—P—— was always equal to the occasion—"why, Somerset House was at first a country palace by the river side."

"And the King took a morning bath in the Thames at the Strand," I laughed out. "I wonder if there's any record of the royal bathing-machine?"

"No; why should there be? He would naturally take a dive from his dressing-room window, and land all fresh for breakfast at the Palace of Westminster," explained my well-read friend. "What is that great barge they came from just now?" he continued.

"I don't know."

"I think—ah! it's that Thames Police hulk; if it is, it has got 'Royalist' painted on the side; can you see?"

I could not see, but we agreed it was the 'Royalist.' "How far do you say that is from the shore, now?" I enquired.

"Say thirty yards—or thirty-five."

"Further, I think," I replied; "and—(mastering a whole conversation in 'Joyce's Scientific Dialogues' on the spot)—water is deceptive as to distances, remember."

"Thanks! but can you give me any authority for that? They were ashore pretty well as soon as they started; it's quite close."

At this moment a spirit of recklessness possessed me; and I said, "Well, now, P——, *what will you bet I don't swim round it from here with my clothes on?*"

P—— gave an exclamation of impatience, but at length answered, "A sov. if you like!"

"Oh, ah! you must give odds; I *will* do it," I persisted. I felt as if revelling in desire for mischief.

"No, no; I'll have nothing to say to it," he answered. "What would your people say to me if you came to grief, I should like to know!"

I was not to be put off with any such caution. Although I had so suddenly conceived the idea, I had already

became quite reckless. I am a moderate swimmer (not fast, but a stayer), and I had no sort of fear of any danger to come from this escapade; besides, I was confident I could get easily round the hulk, and pocket Mr. P——'s money on the event. I urged him, and he soon caught my spirit; he made me an even bet that I would not there and then swim with my clothes on round the hulk and back again. I was to be allowed before starting to remove my coat and boots, and I began to prepare for the adventure by entrusting to P——'s custody my overcoat, and some letters and different memoranda which I wished to preserve their character of paper, and not only to survive to me as pulp.

At this critical moment our conspiracy was threatened with extinction, through the continual interruptions of our movements by stray passengers, all of (as appeared to us) a strangely inquisitive turn of mind. No sooner was I contemplating a gymnastic feat over the balustrade, than one of the workmen—as we thought, but they must all have left much earlier—suddenly shot round the corner; that brought me in a trice to the ground. If I determined on trying the hoarding, and P—— was preparing to give me a leg-up, a metropolitan police constable sauntered by, with meaning in every roll of his gait, which seemed to warn all well-dressed trespassers to desist. At last, however, there was a pause in the footsteps—they were well nigh as troublesome as their prototypes in the "Tale of Two Cities"—and the time had evidently come.

"Now, remember, there's to be no humbug," said P——, who by this time was as eager in urging me as he had before been averse to the attempt, "you are to go quite round the barge, and come back to the steps."

"All right, my boy," I answered. "Only mind you stay there, and don't go away till I get back, because you will have to go home with me, when I'm all wet, and rub me down. For gracious sake, don't lose my coat."

He gave a great laugh as he watched me get over the low hoarding, and then went back to the spot on which we had both been standing, from which place the feat was best to be viewed. I descended the long and wide flight of steps, till (for I was now excited and careless) I found I had gone a step too far, and was on the point of wetting my boots.

I sat down quietly among the slime—"and ooze" one

is almost bound to add, out of deference to the universal custom which has associated these words together, ever since the English had a language. I took off my coat, I folded it up, and depositing it gracefully on a dry spot, placed my hat neatly upon it, and my walking stick by their side. I next removed my boots, and I was ready.

I put my feet in the water. The steps were filthy with slime, for the water was low. I slipped a step. This made a slight splash in the water. P—— gave another tremendous laugh from the embankment above, thinking (as it afterwards appeared) that I never meant to go in, and had wet myself by accident.

"Don't humbug, now, P——," I exclaimed. "If you make a row, I shan't go." I was in dread of discovery by some fresh passers by.

In answer to a further remonstrance, he told me to "go, if I meant to."

Without saying another word, I walked quietly in. I gave myself a slight impetus from the step, and was "off." I should say that I was wearing a pair of very thick trousers, which, it happened, were nearly new, and a double-breasted waistcoat, of open texture, also thick. Thus equipped, I started gaily on my trip.

I found at once that the water was the very reverse of that "limpid stream," so sacred to Lindley Murray; but I carried my clothes much more easily than I had expected, and was making quite rapid way to the hulk. I struck out vigorously, making an effort to do the whole thing with a rush as it were, partly because it was rather cold work, but more especially because I was solicitous not to let my clothes get too heavy. This last was the only anxiety I felt.

I was fully half-way (that is to say, I had accomplished a quarter of my whole distance), when it flashed across my mind that the hulk was getting no nearer. I gave a few more strokes, and was convinced of it. I turned my head. *The steps which had been on my left were now on my right.* I WAS GOING AWAY WITH THE TIDE.

* * * *

In an instant I saw that to perform my bet was impossible. It was merely a hopeless task for any swimmer to attempt to make way against such a tide.

I made an effort to regain the steps, but I saw directly that, too, was hopeless. I could not get one yard nearer, and only went sideways down the tide. It looked serious at least, if not alarming.

Now it had never occurred to either P—— or myself, as we looked at the apparently lake-like river, (whose eddies, which would have shown us the strength of the tide, it was in the dark quite impossible to distinguish), to consider that there must be a tide setting one way or the other. We had settled the whole thing in an instant; neither of us was a waterman, and unhappily we had thought only of the distance to be traversed. It happened that this tide was a strong ebb, and instead of my course being round the hulk, I was already being rapidly carried back in the direction of the Temple, quite past the unfinished works at the pier and landing-place.

Now, for a person situated as I was, in the rush of a strong ebb tide, encumbered with heavy garments, and having no possibility of reaching the shore, was it better to try to keep as stationary as possible (by striking out hard against the tide), until assistance should come, or to give up entirely to the current, and quietly go down stream?

I considered—or I thought I did, for the resolution I took was instantaneous—that I should soon be tired out and enfeebled by contending against the tide, burthened as I was with thick clothing, and that even if I did pursue the former course, I must still be carried down, though probably not at so swift a rate. On the other hand, by going with the tide at least saved all my strength; and, if I was to be picked up at all, had nearly as good a chance in this way as if I struggled to remain near the pier.

I now turned round to call to P—— (whose head and shoulders I thought I could still descry over the parapet). He had lost sight of me, but knew nothing of my dangerous position. I cried out to him, "P——, I am in the tide; call out for a boat!" I tried all I could to make my voice keep its ordinary sound, and even endeavoured to endow it with an especially cheerful tone—an attempt in which, from good P——'s shout of alarm I, the next moment, felt satisfied I must have miserably failed.

"Man overboard! Ho—ho!" I could hear him cry; in his excitement, as I afterwards learned, rushing backwards and forwards on the embankment.

I again shouted, saying I was "all right." But I felt

how necessary it was to husband my strength (which I wasted by turning to shout behind me), and saved all the breath I could.

Matters were now really serious. Having again turned to go with the tide, I struck out manfully, but endeavoured to tire myself as little as possible. I had only gone a few yards further, when I suddenly felt my waistcoat to be an intolerable weight. This held a great deal of water, and seemed fearfully heavy and burthensome. Though I knew there was a good deal of money (at all events five pounds) and a gold pencil case, which I valued, in the pockets, I unbuttoned it at once, and prepared to twist it off. In that instant it flapped and caught round my shoulders; a dread seized me lest it should tie my arms, and render me as powerless as if my hands had been fastened behind me. With an effort I pulled the ends down again, and abandoning, despite its heavy weight, all intention of throwing it off, I buttoned the thing up from top to bottom, and struggled on.

I really thought myself a madman for attempting this foolish feat with such complete ignorance of the danger I underwent. I was not without some thoughts of a far more serious kind; but I hardly could believe I was going to be drowned.

Yet, my chances were indeed far from good, and were getting every moment poorer. I was already at the very end of the works skirting the Temple Pier. There seemed no chance of reaching anything to rest upon or hold to, and my only hope was that I might be followed and picked up in time by a boat started after me by my friend.

Some people who had called to me from one of the temporary platforms, used for the river steam boats, endeavoured to throw a chain, but it was too short, and, besides, was far too heavy to have reached me. They next called out to me to catch an upright beam, one of the piles left in the bed of the river, after its use was accomplished. I was being carried past it as they cried, and could not have reached it had I possessed four times my strength. I did not attempt to do so, but kept straight on. It happened, fortunately, that my rescue was near.

I had only been carried a short distance further when I saw immediately in front of me, floating partly in my course, an enormous fixed beam, slanting away from me in the direction of the tide.

With a great effort I seized it, and running my arm along it, came upon an iron ring. I held this, and was safe!

* * * *

In a minute or two, (during which I rested with my arms over the beam), I saw a light moving towards me through the heavy mist rising from the water. When it came a little closer, I saw it was a lantern in the bow of a rowing-boat, manned by the Thames police; it had left the very hulk, the ambition of getting round which had been the cause of my foolish adventure. I called to the men, and they came up. I climbed, or was pulled, into the boat, and sat meekly in the stern. I was safe, but miserably dirty and fearfully cold.

Now, though rescued from the river, I was in the hands of the Thames police! And these men, as I began to reflect, would certainly conclude from experience that no young gentleman who was not contemplating suicide would be picked off a beam in the river under the circumstances in which I was discovered. At all events, as it looked so serious, was it not probable they would detain me until some investigation should take place? A dreadful *onus probandi* lay on me. To establish that for sport I got into the Thames, from the embankment, in such a tide, with my clothes on, and at night time! It was suspicious, there was no denying it.

But supposing that I managed to convince them—and surely I could call P—— and they would believe him—their orders might be to walk even bathers to the station-house! I was uneasy.

“You can swim, can you?” said one of the men.

“Of course,” I replied, promptly; “I only did this for a bet. I was to swim round that barge, only the tide was so fearfully strong.”

This I managed to say glibly, though my teeth were chattering with cold. I had a lively dread of being taken up, but trusted by assuming an extreme *nonchalance* of manner to disabuse them of the notion that they had got a baffled suicide on board.

“Did you go from the steps, then?” asked another, after a pause.

“Yes,” I replied, briskly, still waiting for an expression of their intentions; “but in this tide I couldn’t get back to them, you know.”

At this moment another boat, also bearing a lantern, met us ; it was going down stream ; we were by this time returning.

"Have you got him?" asked one of those in the other boat.

"Oh, yes; he's here all right," returned my first interlocutor.

This I thought looked ill. We proceeded some yards in silence.

"This is a very strong ebb, isn't it?" I remarked, in a casual tone.

"That it is," shortly.

"I see it's hard work even to pull against it," I continued, suddenly evincing a deep sympathy with my captors.

"Go on there! We ain't going to push you along in this tide," said the man nearest me, addressing the other boat, which was now just ahead of us.

This was an opening for me. I echoed our great disinclination to perform the part of propellers to the boat in front. I did more; I managed to force out some piece of paltry chaff directed at the men in the leading boat. One of my captors laughed. Directly this happened, I felt the battle was half gained. It was a consummate stroke. Surely there never was a suicide, who could chaff with his preservers!

We soon landed at the steps. The second boat contained my hat, coat, and boots, also my walking-stick. These were given me. I put my boots on; they offered considerable resistance, but at last I strode erect. The crisis had arrived. No one had yet made any sign, but I momentarily expected to hear the order given. Already did I fancy the "now you must come along of us, sir," or, "catch hold of the gentleman, Tom, whilst I stow the oars," which was to consign me to the station-house, or perhaps—the hulk!

It did not come. I stepped boldly from the boat. I summoned him who was apparently the head man (how I felt inclined to call him skipper!) I produced from my pocket a wet and slimy half-sovereign. It was received with thanks. I was free.

I found P—— higher up the steps, and he helped me on with my great coat. When my wet condition was thus partially concealed, I looked as dry (say) as Sillery, and was conscious of twice the flavour. Oh! the deposit of that

wondrous river, holding in solution everything that can make man squalid ; and oh ! with what a fine encrustation were my clothes discovered a little later to be enriched !

Poor P—— did not seem to have recovered from his fright, and had a look of distress on his manly brow. I motioned him to hurry on with me, and led the way.

One of the party of rescue opened a gate in the hoarding for us to pass through ; a number of people were on the steps with us, and I was anxious to get home and relieve myself of my mud-laden garments. I was the first to go through the gate ; a policeman was standing on the other side. I did not yet feel safe, and passed him quickly.

"That is one of them," I heard a voice say, just after I had passed. I waited to hear no more, and was round the corner in an instant, taking the turning which leads to Essex Street. P—— did not make his appearance. I was afraid of catching cold, and did not stay for him. Though my clothes were fearfully heavy, I walked at a furious rate, and soon reached my chambers, in —— Inn. I had a rousing fire directly (I had called at a chemist's and got some spirits of camphor to prevent cold), and was dry and comfortable in half an hour.

I now began to wonder what had become of P——. I thought, though he couldn't catch me up on the road, as I ran so much of the way, he might, at least, have taken the trouble to come on and see how I was. How did he know I might not take a fearful influenza, and, perhaps, be frightfully ill ? Altogether, I did not think much of P——.

I read a little of Butler's *Hudibras*, an excellent book when you are out of temper with people, for you are so sure to find some sarcasm that fits them. I got sleepy, and had just risen to go to bed.

I went out first to shut my outer door ; as I did so I heard some one coming at a tearing rate upstairs. It was P—— ! They had noticed him waiting with my coat, and, of course, heard him call for assistance ; he was known, and I was not. They had arrested *him*.

The policeman waiting at the gate charged him first, I believe, with being an accomplice in my suicide ; but, on discovering there was no principal, the sergeant whom he consulted deemed it hard to punish the accessory, and so they took him into custody (as policeman often do) as it were, upon general grounds. It was against all rule that a gentleman should stand at night time on the embankment

and call for a boat to succour a friend in the river. Constable XY. 27 looked on such conduct as altogether frivolous and penal, and considering its author a fitting subject for arraignment at the Westminster Police Court, in the most business-like way in the world, he conducted my unlucky friend to the station.

There, it is needless to say, poor P—— (who fortunately was the very man to keep his temper well) was at once released by the Inspector; and he came charging up to me, cherishing no sort of bitterness against his oppressors, but full of solicitude and concern respecting my condition. He was certainly not more full of the ridiculous character of this closing incident than of the great good fortune of my escape. We talked and moralised for a few minutes on the evening's adventures. He advised me to go to bed directly; I agreed, and he was leaving.

"Well, old boy," said I, as I laid down my Hudibras with a bang, and slapped his ridiculous old back; "it has been true this time that—

'Fortune th' audacious doth *juvare*,
But lets the timidous miscarry.'

"I was not timidous, and you're a fool," retorted P——. I think, perhaps, I partly agree with him.



THE SHEPHERD OF MAZENDERAN,

A PERSIAN STORY.

MOLLAH AHMAC was considered the wisest Mollah in all Mazenderán; he had not, it is true, given to the world his views on the important question of ecclesiastical perfumery, nor written a refutation of his great rival, Mufti Kulin-ju Khan's Coranic arithmetic; but he possessed unmistakable evidence of erudition and sanctity in a very long beard and a huge pair of spectacles. A very popular divine, too, was Mollah Ahmac, as his numerous presentations, kaftáns, and embroidered papooshes testified; and a large and attentive audience listened to his discourse each Friday in the mosque, and derived the greatest spiritual comfort from his fiery denunciations of evil-doers in general, and that Kafir Mufti in particular. To his spiritual duties he added the judicial functions of cazi, and ribald tongues were occasionally heard to whisper that herein existed the secret of his popularity. For, even in Mazenderán, complications will sometimes arise from a misinterpretation of that part of the ethical code which relates to the laws of *meum* and *tuum*, and the reverend magistrate was especially severe on those whom he suspected of heterodox views.

But although such opinions were occasionally enunciated *sub rosa*, he was lauded and courted by all, and devoutly believed himself to be the greatest light that had appeared in Islam since the days of the blessed Ali. Yet, notwithstanding, all these advantages, Mollah Ahmac was not happy. For some time his admirers had noticed, with much anxiety, a change in the placid and self-satisfied demeanour which usually characterised him. He had been observed to let his hookah go out twice in the course of twenty-four

hours, and had actually, on one occasion, declined to witness the execution of a slave for wearing creaking boots, alleging that he had no taste for amusements now.

"Ullágh Beg," said the Mollah one day, to a stout Tartar, who combined the functions of valet, cook, and executioner, with those of muezzin, an office something between that of a parish beadle and the church bells, "Ullágh Beg," said he, "am I a dog?"

"Ha! ha! ha!" replied the Tartar, "how good! His reverence jests," and he gave a significant glance at the rest of the assembly. Fifteen beards immediately wagged with an expression of intense amusement.

"Ullágh Beg," said the Mollah again, more sharply than before, "am I a dog?"

The Tartar's countenance was hardening into another grin, but a look from the Mollah repressed it, and the fifteen beards were simultaneously stroked with an expression of the most solemn concern.

"Ullágh Beg," said Mollah Ahmac, pursuing his zoological inquiries, gravely, "am I a crow, a creature of perverted and displeasing speech?"

"Agha, what words are these? All Mazenderán knows you are the Nightingale of the Faith."

And the owners of the fifteen beards repeated, approvingly, "Nightingale of the Faith."

"Then why," said Mollah Ahmac, "why does not Choban, the shepherd, come to hear my sermons?"

Now Choban was the richest shepherd in Mazenderán, the owner of innumerable flocks and boundless pasture lands, and yet he never came to hear the Mollah's sermons. But this was not the full extent of his iniquity—he would not quarrel with his neighbours, perversely refused to go to law, and the cazi could get no hold upon him.

So Mollah Ahmac was in despair.

"Curses upon all infidels," said Ullágh Beg. "What has Choban to do with the words of wisdom? A Kafir, who buries a dirty dog like a deceased believer!"

The fifteen beards bristled with horror at the thought.

"Ha! is it so?" said Mollah Ahmac. "Ullágh Beg, bring the chabuks;* and say I should like to have a few words with Choban."

It was too true. Poor Choban's favourite dog had died,

* Whips.

and being unwilling to leave his old companion a prey to hungry hyænas, Choban had buried him, and Ullágh Beg passing by had witnessed the ceremony.

Very shortly the discomfited Choban was brought into the presence of offended justice, and viewed, with apprehension, the formidable array of chabuks, and the stern visage of the implacable Mollah.

"So, dog, infidel, son of a burnt father," shouted Mollah Ahmac, "you pervert the rites of El Islam, do you, and bury the carcase of your dog? Ullágh Beg, bring the chabuks."

"But your reverence"—objected Choban, "I—"

"Not a word! infidel, heretic, pagan, heathen, Gubba, Frank, sheitan, brute, pig, padar, sokhta, haramzada, ruffian, cannibal, thief, swindler, bank-director, Jew!" yelled the excited Mollah. "Ullágh Beg, bring the chabuks"

"Only one word, your reverence," pleaded poor Choban, "and then deal with me as you please."

"Then say on, beast," said the Mollah, "and be brief."

"I do not deny," commenced Choban, "that I buried the dog. Poor fellow! he was my companion from his earliest puppyhood, when, deserted by his unnatural parent, my old she goat nurtured and adopted him. She, too, is dead now, and has left eight kids, fine, sleek kids, your reverence. When my poor old dog was dying, I said to him, 'Sag, you are your foster mother's heir; what shall I do with the eight kids that belong to you?' and he answered with his last feeble bark, 'Give them to his reverence, the Mollah.'"

"Ullágh Beg," said Mollah Ahmac, in a bland voice, "bring coffee for two. Choban, my friend, what else was the lamented deceased pleased to observe?"



A FORTUNATE CATASTROPHE.

A FIRESIDE CHARADE FOR PRIVATE ACTING.

CHARACTERS.

OLD GENTLEMAN, ill-dressed and crusty.
 MR. NEVILLE, middle-aged.
 DR. STEWART, a surgeon.
 GEORGE, a sprightly waiter.
 MRS. NEVILLE.
 EVELYN, her daughter.
 LANDLADY, fussy and careful.
 MARY, a cheeky maid-servant.

FIRST SYLLABLE: "INN."

SCENE I.—*A Village Inn.*

[LANDLADY *shows an* OLD GENTLEMAN *into the parlour.*]

LANDLADY. This is the parlour, sir, and a nice comfortable room you'll find it, sir. George has taken your portmanteau upstairs, and I'll have your bed well aired, sir; and now, what would you be pleased to order for supper, sir—chops or steaks, or maybe you'd like a cold fowl? I've one in the house—beautiful, sir; and will you take wine or spirits, sir?

OLD GENT (*eagerly*). Stop, stop my good woman, nothing of the kind. (*Aside*—Why, I should have to pay three or four shillings for that). A cup of tea, with a little bread and butter, with an egg boiled just four minutes and a half, is all I want; and let me have it as soon as possible!

LANDLADY. To be sure, sir; I'll send it in in a twinkling.

[*Exit* LANDLADY.]

OLD GENT. (*soliloquising*) Steaks, indeed, and wine, when I have just been cheated out of ninepence half-penny by that scoundrel of a cabman! No, I didn't come by my money so easily that I need throw it away. . . . Well, I wonder how I shall succeed to-morrow. (*Walking up to the glass*). After all, I am not so very grey; she'll never guess I'm older than her father. Heigho! sixty-four next Monday, and she only twenty. But my £10,000 a year! She's a sensible girl (*looking at his coat*), and won't mind my coat being a little worse for wear; my scarf, too, certainly might look newer. Really, I can't help wishing I were thirty years younger, and had the face of that scapegrace nephew of mine. A good-looking fellow, confound him. And I shouldn't like *him* to come between Evelyn and myself; not that that is very likely, though. He won't leave Edinburgh for some time yet. Besides, I think I'm safe; a golden key opens all locks. Howard's paltry £500 a year. . . .

Enter GEORGE, with supper.]

GEORGE. I've brought your supper, sir; and missus says as I was to tell you, that heggs is so scarce, she's had to give sixpence for this, which it's fresh laid this morning, sir. [*GEORGE busies himself at the fire, window, &c.*

OLD GENT (*sitting down, angrily*). Why didn't your mistress tell me eggs were so dear? (*He opens the egg and finds a chicken in it*). Why, what do you mean, you scoundrel, by telling me the egg is fresh. Here's a full-grown chicken in it—feathers and all!

GEORGE (*with a knowing wink and gentle tap on the old gentleman's shoulder*). Law! sir, you don't say so! If missus sees, she'll charge you for a boiled fowl, and that's three shillings. I ax your pardon, sir, and 'umbly hoffer to make clean away with it for sixpence, and she'll never know. It's your cheapest way, sir.

OLD GENT. You unmitigated scamp! What do you take me for?

GEORGE. Hope no offence, sir; I thought you was a hold man as had seen better days, sir; and I was a tryin' to save you two shillings, and to perwent missus supposin' upon you; 'cause as my father used to say to me—"George," says he, "never don't you go for to cheat nobody. And," says he, "don't you go and in, and with them as does."

OLD GENT. Well, young man, you make a curious appli-

cation of your father's advice; you seems to keep a sharper look-out on other peoples' morals than on your own. Go, now, and tell your "missus" my bed-room must be ready at once. Stop, you can take the tray with you. I have lost all appetite. A boiled fowl indeed; a boiled fowl!

GEORGE. Very good, sir. I say, sir, you'd better haccept my hoffer about the hegg, sir; I'll do the job for fourpence, and missus'll charge you three shillings.

OLD GENT. Get you gone, for a young knave, or I'll expose your rascality! [Exit GEORGE with tray.]

OLD GENT. The confounded impudence of that young puppy, to dare to insult *me*! Seen better days, indeed! (*Goes and looks at the edges of his coat again.*) Well, I've half a mind to buy a new scarf; it would be as well to please Evelyn, if I can. Some girls are fools enough to care for such things. But I'll to bed now; for I must be at the Hall by eleven in the morning. [Exit.]

END OF SCENE I.

SECOND SYLLABLE: "TEST."

SCENE II.—*Drawing Room, Lilling Hall.*

[Enter MARY to dust the room.]

MARY. Well, to be sure; wonders never ceases! Who would have thought what that ugly old man had come for? Marry Miss Evelyn, indeed! What a hinvention key'oles is! I'm glad I listened at the door. I'll tell the poor dear, and what her 'pa and 'ma said, and all. I won't have her scarified. Oh! the wickedness of this 'ere world. Ten thousands pounds a year! Well, if I was Miss Evelyn, I wouldn't have him, if he had fifty times *that*, the grizzly old bear! And missus said—yes, I heard her with my own ears. else I wouldn't have believed it—"I feel highly flattered by the compliment you pay my daughter, Mr. Simpkins, and will do all in my power to ensure your success." And her 'pa said something about "*his* word being *law* to Evelyn, and Mr. Simpkins might consider himself as already accepted!" Well, I wonder the hearth didn't open where they was a standin'. But I know my sweet young lady won't give up

Mr. Howard. They'll break her 'art, poor thing, if they make her, and *his*, too, or else he'll go to the Hinges, or some o' them foreign parts, and die of yellow fever. And ten thousand pounds a-year—oh! what a awful thing!

Enter EVELYN, a letter in her hand.]

EVELYN. Mary, just leave your dusting, please. I want to be alone a few minutes.

MARY (*curtsying*). Yes, Miss Evelyn. (*Aside as she leaves the room.*) I'll tell her all about it when I do her hair for dinner. [*Exit.*]

EVELYN. Yes; it is his own dear writing (*kisses the envelope*). Bless him! Ah! what is there on the seal? Two hearts—and U—n—t—i—"Until"—d—e—a. Oh! "Until death"—the dear fellow. I won't break the seal. (*Opens carefully and reads.*)

"Edinburgh.

"MY OWN EVELYN,—

(What makes me tremble so?)

"Very soon after you receive this, I hope to be with you." (Delightful!) "But, darling, to communicate some very sad news." (Oh! dear.) "Lest you should think it more dreadful than it really is, I may just say that it is the loss of my property." (Oh! what a relief to find it is nothing more!) "I am penniless! How it has come to pass I must relate when I see you. Three months ago, before I knew you, dear Evelyn, this would have been but a very slight trial. Now, darling, it is well nigh overwhelming. It is a withering blight to the fond hope I have been cherishing, of soon, very soon, calling you my own—my wife. Now we must wait, if indeed your parents will ever consent to your union with one who, henceforth, has nothing but his own endeavours to rely upon. For your own fidelity I have no fear, though this would be a severe test to most girls. You, my Evelyn, will, I am sure, be as true to me when under a cloud, as when the sun of prosperity irradiated my path." (Yes; I will prove to him that I can bear this test; but, oh! I fear what my parents may say.)

"Now, darling, adieu till we meet, when I will explain all.

"Yours till death,

"HOWARD EGERTON."

Oh! dear; for the loss of the money I do not care at all;

but how I wish my parents did not make it a matter of such importance. I actually think if that purse-proud old Simpkins were to have the effrontery to make me an offer they would—

Enter MR. and MRS. NEVILLE.]

MRS. N. A letter, my dear? And from whom? (*holding out her hand*).

EVELYN. Oh! 'ma, please. I have only just glanced at it myself. (*Rises to leave the room.*)

MR. N. (*angrily*) Come, come, Evelyn; you forget yourself. Give me the letter at once. There must be no secrets from your parents.

EVELYN *hands him the letter, which he reads with*

MRS. N. *Then in a gentler tone to EVELYN.*

MR. N. My poor child, I'm afraid I spoke crossly to you; but I didn't know this letter contained what must be to you very dismal intelligence; for of course my Evelyn has sufficient discretion to see at once that we, as her parents and best friends, could not do her such an injustice as to allow her to unite herself to a beggar.

EVELYN. (*crying.*) Oh! 'pa, what can you mean. Howard's profession—

MR. N. (*interrupting.*) Stop, stop, my dear, and hear me. There is a balm for every wound. Your mamma and I have come to seek you now purposely to congratulate you on the brilliant prospect that has most unexpectedly opened before you.

MRS. N. Yes; look up my child, and dry those tears; but this moment, Mr. Simpkins, that intelligent, amiable gentleman, we met the other evening, and who danced a polka with you—has left the house.

EVELYN. Oh, I'm so glad he's gone; I cannot bear him, Ma—my toes are sore yet with his treading on them; he's too clumsy and old to dance.

MRS. N. Let me beg, Evelyn, you will not speak so disrespectfully of one whom your Papa and I esteem most highly. He came this morning to pay you the highest compliment that can be paid to a young lady.

EVELYN. Complimented *me*, Mamma?

MRS. N. (*continuing.*) To make you an offer of marriage, Evelyn.

EVELYN (*quickly*). Oh! but I am engaged. You told him so, did you not?

MR. N. (*without heeding Evelyn's question*). An offer which your Mamma and I, with true parental regard for your welfare, Evelyn, have accepted.

EVELYN. But, Pa, what could you have been thinking of; I am the affianced wife of Howard Egerton; and were I *not*, I could not marry *him*! Oh, no! sooner would I die!

MR. N. Calm yourself, Evelyn; you are speaking like a foolish wayward child. Mr. Simpkins is a gentleman of most estimable character.

MRS. N. And has an income of £10,000 a year!

EVELYN. I do not care for money.

MR. N. I desire you will not speak in that foolish strain. We have made the engagement for you, and abide by it you *shall*.

EVELYN (*falling at her Mamma's feet*). Oh, dearest Mamma, plead for me! I cannot marry *him*!

MRS. N. Rise, Evelyn, and listen to reason. You cannot marry Mr. Egerton; then why *not* Mr. Simpkins? £10,000 a year, Evelyn, think of that! Think of the splendour in which you will live, the carriages and servants you will have at your command! You will be the first lady in the county!

EVELYN (*crying*). I would rather be Howard's wife and have to work with him from morn to night to earn our bread, than marry *him*, with all the wealth of Croesus!

MR. N. (*pacing up and down the room in an excited state*) Rise, Evelyn (*she gets up*). I am ashamed you have so little common sense. Learn that Mr. Simpkins dines with us to-morrow, and I expect you to receive him as your accepted suitor.

EVELYN. Oh, father—my dearest father—I cannot. (*she falls, fainting*).

MR. N. How, now! What is the matter with the girl! This comes of reading romances. (*He stoops and tries to raise her*).

MRS. N. (*runs to the bell, then to her daughter*) Evelyn, my dear child! (*to MARY, who answers the bell*) A glass of water quickly!

MARY (*returning with it*). Oh, my poor young mistress!

MRS. N. (*putting it to EVELYN's lips*). Evelyn, dear child, open your eyes—here, drink, this will revive you.

MR. N. That letter has been too much for her, poor child!

EVELYN (*feebly*) I'm better now, and would like to go to my room.

MRS. N. So you shall dear. There! Lean on me.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

END OF SCENE II.

THIRD SYLLABLE: "ATE."

SCENE III.—*Drawing Room.*

[*Enter MR. and MRS. NEVILLE, helping along OLD GENT, who totters in, bent double by excruciating pain.*]

MRS. N. (*frightened and weeping*). Dear, dear Mr. Simpkins, what *is* the matter? Pray tell us what we can do to alleviate this terrible suffering!

OLD GENT. Ugh! ah! ohhh! I am *so* ill—so ill.

MR. N. It's gout, perhaps?

OLD GENT. Gout! sir—no, sir. I might drink port wine out of buckets by your account. Gout, indeed! (*is seized with a spasm*); it's pop-pup-poison, sir. Poison! Send for doctors instantly.

MRS. N. (*Rings bell wildly*) Send for—

(*Enter MARY.*)

MARY. Bless my-dear-alive! whatever are the matter with him, Mum?

OLD GENT. *Poison!* the matter, girl, pois—(*writhes in agony*)—oh. (*to Mr. N.*) I'd gout him! Poison, I say!

MARY (*to Mr. N.*) Now who would have thought it? The poor, dear gentleman must have been prowling about and eating them bits of bread and butter we leave on the pantry floor for rats—he's took strike-nine, certain. (*aside*) Them misers, they'd go and dine on a dust-bin, I do believe!

OLD GENT (*furiously*) Gurl! how dare you insin—insin—uate. (*fiercely to Mr. N.*) Gout, indeed!

MARY. Insin—uate. No, sir; it's what *you* ate!

MR. N. (*reprovingly*) Mary! leave the room. Go for a doctor—quick!

MARY. And the Crowner, sir; shall I fetch the Crowner, sir, to sit—?

OLD GENT. No-o-oo! (*shouts*) Fetch a policeman (*exit MARY*), and when he comes, I'll give you in charge for—oh! oh! (*twisting*) mu-mu-murder!

MRS. N. (*still in tears*) Please, dear sir, do, do describe your alarming symptoms—try to remember what food you've taken.

Re-enter MARY, with DOCTOR STEWART and stomach pump.]

MARY. (*officially*) Yes, do try and recollect, sir.

OLD GENT. Why I'd (oh!) soup, fish, and so on.

DR. STEWART. But, sir, endeavour to recall the details of your dinner.

MARY. H-every little thing, sir—like a waiter h-at a eating-'ouse. "Steak; bread, potatoes," hetcetera; you know, sir—has if you was—no, as if *somebody else* was agoing to pay for 'em.

DR. STEWART. Yes, sir, re-call the concomitants of your repast—or shall I? (*he adjusts stomach pump*).

OLD GENT. (*very feebly*) Why, I'd a sole.

MARY. (*aside*) A soul! No; that he never had, I'm certain!

OLD GENT. And I'd bread of course.

MARY. Well, sir, if you goes picking it up anywheres, it's likely to be coarse enough.

OLD GENT. Hold your tongue!—and mustard, and a small slice of beef, with sauce.

DOCTOR STEWART. (*hastily*) Sauce!—what sauce?

MRS. N. Horse-radish.

DR. STEWART. Horse-radish!—*Hemlock!* depend—there's much resembl—

OLD GENT. (*struggling to rise, gasps*) Then—I'm done for—and my Will—it's not made. A lawyer—quick—a—oh! law! (*falls into DOCTOR'S arms,—is dragged out of room,* MRS. N. *following with stomach pump.*)

MARY. (*Apostrophising OLD GENT as they bear him off*)

“ Do not chew the 'emlock rank,
Growing on the weedy bank,
But the yallow cowslip eat,”

That'll make you—a deal nicer, old gentleman, than you are now. (*Confidentially to audience*) I'll go and work the handle for them. He's only frightened, I'm sure.

(*Exit.*)

END OF SCENE III.

THE WORD.—“INTESTATE.”

SCENE IV.—*Drawing Room.*

Enter MARY (showing Mr. Howard Egerton in). There is only Miss Evelyn at home, sir. Master and mistress have gone out for a walk. Shall I tell her you are in the drawing-room, sir?

HOWARD. Yes, Mary, at once please. *[Exit MARY.]* Heigho! what a shocking thing! and to have happened in this house, too! To die of poison! My poor uncle! I am, indeed, sorry. Strange, too, that he should have left no will! And *I* his heir! I scarcely can believe it true, although the letter from his lawyer distinctly states that Joseph Simpkins having died intestate, Howard Egerton, as next of kin, succeeds to his estates. No, there can be no doubt, and I have £10,000 a year to offer Evelyn! She cannot know it yet. I shall see whether the news of my loss had changed her, and how she will receive this intelligence. Ha! here she comes.

Enter EVELYN.]

EVELYN. My Howard!

HOWARD. Dearest Evelyn! *(they embrace).*

EVELYN. O! Howard! how I have longed to see you.

HOWARD. Then my altered fortune has not changed my Evelyn's heart?

EVELYN. Can you ask? Do you think so basely of me as to suppose for a moment I should love you the less because you were poor?

HOWARD. No, Evelyn! beyond all others—beautiful and true, I feel you are faithful.

EVELYN. Thanks, dearest, for your trust. Oh! Howard! such a sad thing has happened here. An old gentleman—a Mr. Simpkins.

HOWARD. Yes, dear, I know it all. He was my uncle, Evelyn.

EVELYN *(quickly)*. Ah! you are in mourning, and I did not perceive it. Your uncle, Howard? We did not know. And did you know him well? And did you love him? My poor Howard!

HOWARD. I had not seen him for many years; since then he has become immensely rich.

EVELYN (*shuddering*). Oh! yes; I know he was rich—very rich.

HOWARD. He died without a Will, and his riches now are—mine, yes, mine and *thine*, dear Evelyn, if thou wilt share them with me.

EVELYN. Oh! Howard, is it true, indeed? Then I am spared a life long agony.

HOWARD. How! What mean you, Evelyn?

Door opens, enter MR. and MRS. NEVILLE.]

MRS. N. Why, my dear husband, here is our young friend Mr. Egerton arrived already.

MR. N. Ah! how glad I am to see you, my dear fellow.

MRS. N. Evelyn, have you offered Mr. Egerton any refreshment?

EVELYN. No, 'Ma. How—Mr. Egerton has not been here many minutes.

MRS. N. Ring, my dear, at once.

HOWARD. Nothing, my dear Mrs. Neville, thank you, until you lunch, when I shall be glad to join you.

MRS. N. We shall feel only too happy.

MR. N. And now, my dear fellow, allow me to congratulate you on the princely fortune you have just inherited. We have this morning—this hour, indeed—heard from Mr. Thompson, the lawyer of our late lamented friend Mr. Simpkins, that you are his nephew, and in fact, his heir.

MRS. N. I am sure Evelyn will unite with us in wishing you health, and a long life to enjoy your inheritance.

HOWARD. Thanks; I am sure you are sincere in your congratulations; but from Evelyn I want more! I want her to share with me the burden of this wealth!

[EVELYN hides her face.]

MR. N. You do my daughter too great an honour. Before this change in your circumstances, we had thought with pleasure on Evelyn's one day becoming your wife; but now, however, she shall answer for herself—in such a matter, I would not interpose *my* influence.

MRS. N. Oh, no! My Evelyn's heart must alone dictate her answer.

HOWARD (*to EVELYN*). What say you, dearest? But, I know your heart—you will come to share my lot, to gladden my home—which else would be dark and desolate, tho' all England should call me lord.

(EVELYN, still hiding her face, gives him her hand, which he raises to his lips).

HOWARD. Now my happiness is complete.

Door opens and MARY appears.]

MARY. Lunch is ready, if you please, Ma'am.

All rise, HOWARD offers his arm to MRS. N. ; MR. N. takes EVELYN.]

HOWARD (to MRS. N.). You have reason to congratulate me now, Madam. I value Evelyn above all the gold of Peru!

MR. N. (to EVELYN). My dearest child, believe me, I rejoice in your good fortune—as only a parent can rejoice!

[Exeunt omnes.]



C H A R A D E .

Oh, sweet to wander at eventide
 By the gleam of the setting sun,
 In peaceful valley, on lone hill side,
 Or by the slowly ebbing tide,
 When day is almost done !

Oh, sweet the sound of the bubbling brook
 That sings in its merry way,
 While in some deep, sequestered nook
 You take a foolish fairy book,
 To while an hour away !

But how can such sweets as these compare,
 Young lover, come rede me right,
 With the magical grace of a presence fair,
 Shedding a balm throughout the air,
 And a sense of pure delight ?

The whole world brightens upon the view
 As if in a glad surprise—
 And heaven seems doubly heaven to you,
 It beams so exquisitely blue,
 Reflected in her eyes !

'Twas on a sweet and gentle eve
 That wearied with the town,
 Of clubs and chambers taking leave,
 His wayward fancies forth to weave,
 Went Mr. Edwin Brown.

He passed through meadows and a lane,
 And turning slowly back again,
 He straight encountered sweet Miss Jane.
 'Twas her he loved—on her his thought
 Had all the evening turned,
 He bowed and joined her,—gently taught
 He spoke quite unconcerned.

Through one more meadow they had passed,
 And now were in the very last.

* * * *

Just as this wide one they were crossing,
My first, 'ere two-twos could be reckoned,
 Appeared in no end of *my second*,
 Prepared for pitching and tossing.

My first, that till now had so leisurely grazed
 Had happened to catch, as her head she raised,
 Miss Jane's petticoat's scarlet attraction ;
 Tis strange that so little a thing should vex,
 (Strange, that is until we have noted the sex,)
 And rouse to such furious action !

Poor little Miss Jane was frightened to death,
 But she managed with loss of a great deal of breath
 To hurry, and scurry, and scramble,
 Till she found herself safe in a little while
 In the hedge on the other side of the stile,
 Releasing her dress from a bramble !

Now pluck up *my whole*, Mr. Brown, and be bold
 The creature I pray you to worry,
 Then when to her 'ma the whole story is told
 You may win from that lady opinions of gold,
 For not running away in a hurry !

In slow retreat he safely gains
 The shelter she has sought ;
 And as they wander up the lanes,
 Her thanks reward him for his pains ;
 And if her dress she caught,
 And if he stooped and stole a kiss,
 That's nought to you or me, I wis,

* * * *

Slowly they lingered side by side,
 And an arm around a waist I spied,
 Kept there without resistance ;
 The shades of night were gathering round,
 And, I just could hear, in the deep profound,
 Smacking of bliss—a most musical sound
 Dying away in the distance.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

“ The most melodious bard of modern times,
One foremost in the living ranks of art;
Verses as resonant as silver chimes,
Pictures that open to us nature's heart.”

- 1.—A being, useful in his way,
Who often makes the man in this our day,
And, profiting by Adam's fall,
Thrives now, tho' otherwise he had not lived at all.
- 2.—One of the mighty nine,
Who, all divine,
On happy man their god-like influence poured ;
But she of all must be the first adored.
- 3.—Signifies intellect, and somewhat rare,
As those who have it oftenest declare.
- 4.—The hungry want for which most men do crave,
For ever swallowing all that they are able ;
From north, east, west, and south it comes ; we have
It brought us daily to our breakfast table.
- 5.—Long, long ago, when good Queen Anne
Most royally ruled the nation,
Or further back, when first began
Great London's Conflagration.
- 6.—The well-loved bard—the loving child,
Of “ Caledonia stern and wild.”
- 7.—The jewel in a lady's ear,
The diamond on her breast ;
Oh ! would that I might nestle there,
So sweetly there to rest !
- 8.—Italia's “ fatal gift of beauty”
Shews here most fair ; and fain would I,
Oblivious to call of duty,
See, as the proverb goes, and die.

TRIPLE ACROSTICS.

No. 1.

By my first, clever Ben was invincible reckoned,
 But fate was against him I've heard :
 And so to avoid my too imminent second,
 He made up his mind to my third.

1.

The Henrys and Edward and Mary and Bess,
 For a hundred odd years we served under :
 A curious lot, I am bound to confess :
 Now what was their surname, I wonder.

2.

To say of a man he's fat, corpulent, stout,
 Or podgy, is reckoned amiss :
 'Tis a method of speaking completely gone out ;
 We should say he's decidedly this.

3.

A prince, who a very high office did fill,
 Had such odd-coloured hair on his head, sir :
 His enemies nick-named him Carrotty Bill,
 But his friends called him something instead, sir.

4.

A royal virago once ruled o'er a nation
 Who lived—but perhaps it may be a
 Mistake to let out their exact habitation—
 Her name it was Boadicea.

5.

When the amorous swain says good night to his lass,
 Ere tearing himself from his bliss ;
 There's something that's pretty nigh certain to pass,
 Besides the conventional kiss.

6.

In making acrostics, our leisure we fill ;
 For, if what they tell us is true,
 There's someone finds plenty that's mischievous still
 For idle young persons to do.

No. 2.

Said Jonathan fiercely to John one fine day,
 " You've done me a damage ; come, come, you must pay."
 Said John, " Recollect, my dear Sir, you're my brother :
 " We'll settle this mess and shake hands with each other."
 So my first to my third has most friendlily beckoned :
 And now they've agreed *àpropos* of my second.

1.

There's a martyr whose blood, kept at Naples, they say,
 Becomes liquid each year in September and May ;
 They tell me it's true, and I really don't doubt it,
 But think there is some hocus-pocus about it.

2.

Within the ivy-mantled tower
 The owl hoots out the midnight hour :
 And in its nest it sees, I wis,
 A croaking something ; perhaps it's this.

3.

An exclamation which the ancient Jews
 On public festivals were wont to use.

4.

A town on the Tyne, where a battle was fought ;
 And if you don't know, why, drat it, you ought.

5.

Don't say that French ladies do nothing but guess
 What will probably be the next fashion in dress.
 Half-a-century back there was one, sir, who knew
 How to write clever books and philosophise too.

6.

Deign, fair Thalia, to behold this book,
 And from it every perfection blot,
 Upon us with a fav'ring aspect look ;
 In two short words we own you—you know what.

7.

They said to John Bright,
"We have won in the fight,
"Here's India will gladly receive you."
But he shook his old head,
And Quaker-like said—
But to guess what it was I will leave you.

No. 3.

These horrid acrostics they're very absurd :
They'll soon make my first both my second and third.

1. A German town where sausages are made.
2. The organ by which hearing is conveyed.
3. Bass is the maker of the best of beer.
4. This is what baby calls his father dear.



THE GRAY'S INN MAN'S STORY.

Hain ! Expliquez !
Toujours ce Monsieur Je-ne-comprends-pas !

Gray's Inn ? That is not one of the Inns of Court—why it belongs to the attorneys !

Oh, no, my dear fellow ; it is an Inn of Court, and has Benchers.

You don't say so—why, I never met a man that belonged to it.

I belong to it.

Well, what sort of a place is it ?

I will tell you.

Gray's Inn, so called (you will find in Dugdale) from the Lords Grey de Wilton, formerly proprietors of the soil on which the Inn stands, is situated just without the City, upon the Northern side of High Holborn.

It is in no way an elegant locality. It is very dirty, but that is to a great extent not the fault of Gray's Inn at all. Some of the houses in it are very poor, but that is not the fault of the Gray's Inn of the present day. The most noticeable places in it are Gray's Inn Square and South Square. The Hall and Library of the Society divide these two spaces ; South Square, as its name would lead you to suppose, lying to the Holborn side of the Hall.

Do you know the Inn ? Well, come and walk round part of it. We will enter by Warwick Court. You are then in Gray's Inn Place, and next pass under a long arch.

Holloa ! " Head Quarters !" What is this ?

That is an orderly room, forming the head quarters of the Fortieth Middlesex Volunteers. Now we are in Field Court, and you see the old garden. Its walks used to be famous. It was one of the most fashionable places in London when Pepys wrote his Diary.

Well, no one ever hears of it now, I suppose ; I never knew you had got a garden. What is it used for ?

The Fortieth Middlesex Volunteers drill here in the Summer.

Oh! this is Gray's Inn Square itself. Those must be nice chambers on the garden side. The Square is a good size, too. Is it ever put to any use?

The Fortieth Middlesex Volunteers drill there in the Winter.

I suppose there is a way from this Square into the garden?

Yes; there is a door at number five. It would be convenient, only it is never open.

What! is that door not used at all?

No one may pass that way to the garden but the Fortieth Middlesex Volunteers.

That old gate leads into Gray's Inn Road, of course. I wonder you don't close it; there is such a noise from the traffic outside.

It is partially closed; the large gate is kept shut, and the wicket is regularly closed at a certain hour in the evening.

And then no one can pass in or out?

No one; except, that is, the Fortieth Middlesex Volunteers.

I remember hearing that your Hall is a good one inside; it doesn't look good for much from here. Who do you say dines there?

In Term, the members of the Inn.

And does no one use it out of Term?

Oh, yes; the Real Property Lecturer, some Charity Schools, and the Fortieth Middlesex Volunteers.

This South Square is a quiet little place; there is rather an echo in these squares though.

Yes, you hear everything at night time; in the day the racket from Gray's Inn Road and Holborn destroys the echo.

Why, what is there to hear at night time?

This is the awkward squad drilling ground of the Fortieth Middlesex Volunteers.

Don't I see the same words "Fortieth Middlesex," on the window-blind in the corner?

The corner? You mean number ten. Yes; I never pass that house if I can help it.

Nonsense; why not?

That has recently been taken as an ARMOURY by the Fortieth Middlesex Volunteers.

What do they keep there?

I don't know. *They began by bringing two barrels of gun-*

powder ; a neighbour objected to explosives, and they were so courteous as to withdraw them.

Is that one of their notices stuck up on the wall ?

Very likely ; let us read it : " The Lieut.-Colonel directs that all rifles to be returned into store by the 18th instant." Yes, that is one of the notices of the Fortieth Middlesex Volunteers.

Well ; it is rather curiously penned. Is that the smallest living amateur ?

I don't myself know a great deal about private theatricals.

It strikes me your people make a good deal of the Fortieth Middlesex Volunteers. What do you fellows get paid for all this ?

That is exactly what, with all my efforts, I have failed to discover. I confess it does not seem quite the right use for the property of a learned Society.

Does the Inn, as a body, recognise this sort of thing ?

I don't know. Remember, I have not taken silk, so, of course, I am not yet a Benchers.

Of course. But do you think the Fortieth Middlesex will stay here much longer ?

No, I do not.



I MARRIED MY AUNT.

THAT seems an impudent title, standing there, as it does, unflanked by qualifying context. Seems, I say; for although I must ask you to be prepared for the worst, with regard to the character of the following narrative (Christmas fare, whether mental or material, is always unwholesome), yet my title is, at least, capable of explanation.

Now I don't, can't, won't, seriously suppose that you, at this season, will be so uncharitable as to conclude, from the statement at the head of the page that I could deliberately contract matrimony with my own aunt, or (which would be most brazen) could glory in the flagitious deed, and exalt myself above my fellows who have *not* married their aunts.

No; I hope I have studied the "prohibited degrees" in the Prayer Book through too many long sermons to commit such a breach of the law; so dismiss this first and most objectionable interpretation of the titular announcement at once. But possibly you may think that I wedded a sister of my father's second wife; such a supposition is as incorrect as the preceding—or the proceeding—would be. Or that I am in Holy Orders, or a Registrar, or the "Smith of Gretna" *redidivus*, and performed the nuptial ceremony when my relative was a blushing bride. I am not—did not. Yet I married my aunt.

I insist upon it, and am prepared to take the credit or other consequences.

In the days of Crinoline, those days—well, perhaps you may recollect them, so I won't maunder; although it certainly is usual and becoming to offer tribute to a remote past, in the shape of a reflection, or a pretty yearning, or *that* quotation from Horace.

However, at the period indicated above I was a boy; *and I was not practical*. Bear that fact in mind, please; it will aid you presently, when you, out of your leniency, wish to excuse me. Of course I am tremendously practical in 1868—being an adult, and a six months' old lawyer. Fancy me enthusiastic—or reading poetry, except for juridical (or, at least, for jury-tickle) purposes—now! Yet, *ætat.* 14, I was even *imaginative*; used to "gaze" at horizons and embers in my finest moods, and occupy the most comfortable chairs, while

reading the most unprofitable books in the house, when my feelings were less exalted. Bless me! if I were to see myself of fourteen so conducting himself at the present moment, I would call him "Sir," and rebuke him, like a perjuring witness, and his place in Shelley or Wordsworth, aye! even in "Waverley," should be lost incontinently.

The boy—for I really think I must speak of my "alter ego" in the third person, or the pen would blush for its holder until I should find myself writing with red ink—too suggestive of editorial corrections to be a pleasant 'vehicle'—the boy grew in Westglades, a hale country house, which may have been new and ugly a century ago, but is not so to-day. It is broadleaved and irregular, has beautifying years, and yews, and cedars, and a lichened sun-dial on its lawn; it is fair, very fair, and altogether—a highly eligible freehold messuage and premises. Inside Westglades were (I change the tense in order to be precise) old-fashioned sideboards, and servants, and family prayers; there were hounds, by Herring, on the walls, and other hounds *by* those hounds, on the hearthrug—indolent dogs, but useful in winter as intelligent media for closing doors left ajar.

A special feature of the home was its drawing-room—an excrescence on the original building, forming a separate wing. It was huge, and had been built to accommodate scarlet trespassers, who, at certain seasons of the year, "broke and entered the close" in front of its windows, and there, "with a great number of horses and dogs, did, with their feet by walking, trample" and damage the well-kept lawn—for which trespasses aforesaid, the offenders were taken and imprisoned in the spacious room, and condemned to consume enormous breakfasts. But in the days of which I write, the hunting breakfasts were discontinued, and the girls had taken possession of the apartment, and placed many sofas, and much eccentric-shaped furniture therein—which was pushed aside in winter evenings when coated teetotums could be found, who would revolve through the void expanse of room. The "people" of Westglades consisted of two sons (he of whom I write being Secundus), three daughters, whose photographs, at all events, were undistinguishable from each other, and a mother, the life tenant, who wore quiet mourning—to be worn evermore.

When September came, came also brother Will (owner of the fee-simple of the estates), from his abode in London, with gun-cases and acquaintances; and when December

arrived, Will arrived again with friends and hunting crops. For there is this distinction; that your birds may be shot by acquaintances, while horses should only be lent to, or borrowed for friends.

Some dear pretty gir—pshaw! I mean certain *femes soles* and spinsters, reached Westglades about Christmas time, in order to help our sisters to entertain Will's friends during cruel frosts, and to beguile them from pacing the stable yard, and referring to the weather in naughty language. I did not "cotton" to these friends of Will; good genial fellows they were I am now sure, but then I seemed to see their hand always uplifted to be placed patronisingly upon my reluctant head.

However, there was one of them to whom I took immensely. He was both acquaintance and friend, and therefore appeared at our house both in Autumn and Winter. Not that he was very good with either gun or hunter, for somewhere under the cap of his knee lingered the fragment of a Russian shell, which prevented his walking far over turnips, and made a "forty minutes' burst" rather more painful than exhilarating. Neither was he particularly famous as a carpet knight for his "memento of the Crimea" checked dancing, and an ignorance of music prevented his displaying that tiniest of all drawing-room accomplishments, the art of "turning over."

Nevertheless no one ever thought of asking "what there was in him"—beyond making occasional enquiries after the bit of shell. He had had everything that the Crimea could furnish, from fame to low fever, but the War was even then being forgotten in the Mutiny, and Captain Travis had lapsed into a quiet, hobbling gentleman. Most people so regarded him. But to me (in my then state) he was Chester—Ivanhoe—Sir Philip Sydney (what a young *fool* I was to be sure!) and I used to mark him down in the smoking-room when the rest were away, and there examine him and cross-examine him about his achievements. He regarded me as a sort of juvenile Sir James Scarlett, but I must say of *him* that he was a most reluctant witness, and gave his evidence in a very discreditable manner. He liked me—that was his eccentricity.

As there was but one of the visitors that I cared for, so there was only one of the visitresses whom I particularly liked (oh! I *was* an ill-conditioned young brute), and that one was Aunt Gracie.

She was the youngest sister of my father, who was himself the eldest of a large family, and had married young. Her age was twenty-one or twenty-two; at all events, she was not sufficiently ancient to be an unpleasant relative to a boy. She was exquisitely beau—I mean she was a young woman of considerable personal attractions; she was rich, (being the adoptee and legatee of a Cræsus then defunct), and she was peaceful—that is to say, didn't bother by shutting up a fellow's book, and making him hold skeins of wool, you know, as other girls do. I studied her character, and I decided that she was a combination of *Lanthe*, *Lady Jane Grey*, and *Miss Nightingale*.

Now, owing to Christmas-tide, and holly, and impromptu dances, it happened that there was a considerable amount of spooning amongst the guests of *Westglades*. Yet, no imputation of flirting was ever breathed against *Aunt Gracie*. She was neither a "jolly girl" nor a demure one; I fancy that she must have been forewarned by some wary old trustee, that her wealth might prove attractive, and so she put all inclining suitors—in fact, all people—on the very disadvantageous footing of "friends." No mistress of slang, yet could she talk to young *Keyes of Caius*, or *Stough of the "Home,"* or *St. James of the Guards*, as if she belonged to the same college, or circuit, or regiment. She would enter the *Smoke Sanctum* for a chat, and cigars would go out involuntarily; the tired sportsmen became again ladies' men, and though no one paid her compliments to her face, yet all would regret her departure.

Sometimes—very rarely—an inacute youth would drop his voice, and become sentimental, and emphasise "you" when talking to her; and then she would instantly turn intelligently stupid and uncomprehensive until the poor fellow stammered, and was glad to be practical again. Really there seemed to be a probability of her remaining *sui juris*. Matches were made for her by many hostesses at many houses; they were matches which "only ignited on the box," and the box could not be found. When dismissed from the dessert-table untimely (that I might not clog the free flow of apocryphal anecdote) I wandered on to the hearth-rug of the drawing-room; I heard matrons jeer at her for her unsusceptibility, but she would smile at them, and glide to the piano to play waltzes.

In one respect, and one only, 'Aunt Gracie did not please me—she did not sufficiently admire my hero.

Certainly, I always found her attentive when I described his exploits in glowing terms—terms which the scanty materials he gave me did not warrant. But she invariably pursued the subject of military prowess, by reminding me of the noble conduct of some Corporal Brown or Private Jones, who had also distinguished himself at the Alma. Of course, as an Englishman, I was proud of the bravery of Brown or Jones; but I felt that to allow it to appear to conflict with the achievements of Captain Travis (who had carried several Browns and Joneses out of action upon his gladiatorial shoulders), was rank treason, and abominable bad taste.

The Hero, on the other hand, behaved better than Aunt Gracie; and when I lauded her to him (for we were quite chums), he did not cap my praises by pointing out the attractions of an Edith, or a Helen. In my heart I thanked Captain Travis for his forbearance.

One evening at Christmas-tide, there was a great gathering in the drawing-room at home. Some one had a convenient birth-day, I think, which served as an excuse for beating the country and gathering new guests, in addition to those who were already almost making the old house bulge. The entertainment was dancing, relieved, of course, by squalling; only one person *sang*—Aunt Gracie. She played, too; it was that now worn-out piece of descriptive music called “*Les Cloches du Monastere*,”—there is an abominable oft repeated note in it which can make my eyes (a lawyer’s eyes!) as damp as the panes of a green-house still.

I turned over the pages for Aunt Gracie, and when she finished playing, retired to a nook in the room where Captain Travis sat, injuring the clasps of an album.

“You’re a clever young beggar,” he said to me, as I seated myself next him—and he said it grudgingly, insomuch that I asked “Why?”

“Turning over, knowing notes, and all that sort of thing,” he growled. I did not know what to answer, so I repeated “Why?”

“I wish *I* could do anything for her,” he said.

I varied the why into an interrogative “What?”

“Oh, anything—*die* for her!” he muttered in such a low intense voice, that I felt very uncomfortable.

Holding my tongue, I sat still and thought over what he had let slip.

Here were all my novels realised in a moment! Here was

my hero in hopeless love (why was I not born a girl? I should have discovered his plight long before). I glowed with interest.

For a quarter of an hour after the remark which took me so by surprise, we sat in silence, watching Aunt Gracie flit about the room; she was dancing or doing the hospitable notice business, in which she was simply perfect. Then I ventured to observe, in nervous voice, for I was not sure of my ground:

"I say, Captain Travis, you know—why don't you tell Aunt Gracie?"

"Tell her what, old fellow?"

"*That.*"

"Because I'm lame, and no good for anything, and stupid," he answered; but he seemed only savage with himself and not with me; and by the way he was rather conversing with himself than with me.

After a while I left him, not daring to open the subject again. I was up to my soul in the romance of it all, and was not equal to the occasion. This being so, through a sort of dumb instinct, I sought the aid of feminine intellect, but I sought it with the determination never to betray my hero's escaped secret.

Agnes (my sister number two) was both flattered and gratified when I offered to let her dance with me, if she liked. I was "a dear boy," she said, and "had quite come out of my shell."

As we danced together, I began upon my favourite topic, viz., the nobility of my hero, and then glided craftily into admiration of Aunt Gracie. I soon discovered that Agnes had thought long ago what a superb couple they would make. Bless her heart! And now they pretend that women are unfitted for the Franchise!

"But it will never be," Agnes added, authoritatively.

"Why not?—doesn't Auntie like him?"

"Of course; she likes everybody in the world, that's the worst of it—but I really think she likes him a little better than everybody."

"Then what's to prevent it?"

"He'll never ask her about it."

"Why not?" I persisted—feeling, nevertheless, that I was decidedly the inferior of the sister Agnes, whom I loved, but had despised.

"Why, because, don't you see, dear old 'Stoops,'" she

irreverently replied, "Auntie is rich, and Captain Travis is—well, unbusiness-like, you know, and no doubt has some nonsensical no—no—" (I bumped Agnes up against two whizzing waltzers to punish her for depreciating my hero)—"notion that Auntie would think he cared for her money, if he prop—prop—posed," ended Agnes, as I left her, out of breath, on an ottoman, and went to reflect upon what she had said.

The aspect of affairs was bad. "He's such a grand, scrupulous fellow," I told myself, gloomily, as I took my favourite station at the end of the mantel piece, and played with the girandoles. "If the bank would break, or he were to save her life"—I was then well up in novelistic (which are *not* novel) expedients—"it would be all right; but at present things look bad." I tinkled the glass prisms until they rang quite a peal; but the peal found no echo in my imagination.

People were walking through a quadrille. Aunt Gracie was *dancing* it with, and to please, some old doctor from the neighbouring town, who wore a frilled shirt, and did his steps conscientiously.

It was in the days of crinoline, and dear Annt Gracie floated about, borne, as it were, upon pure white billows of muslin. Her place in the quadrille was close to me, and she stood there between the figures in her own sweet gracefulness, letting the old doctor pay her compliments—a privilege she allowed to no other partners.

Something startling was soon to happen, and I was to bring it about.

In the course of the dance, Aunt Gracie's extended skirt often swept near me. As I sat by the fire-place, my foot was resting on the fender. She moved airily in the *Balancez*, and her light muslin dress caught for an instant on the toe of my boot. I stooped to release it. Quite forgetting to leave my hold of the ornamental candlestick I was still playing with, I brought a whole cluster of small wax-lights to the ground.

Her dress was on fire in a moment!

I called to *him*, and through the parting crowd he came (as I felt he would)—came with a thick worsted table cover, snatched from underneath a pile of books and knick-knacks, came with a limping rush, pitching me, of little use, and the old doctor, of none, both aside; and I heard Aunt Gracie call, "Oh! my love!" and saw the up-flaring flame beaten down, striven with, extinguished!

It was a fiery proposal that, but I verily believe there was no other.

My terror at the accident was at first excessive. When they found Aunt Gracie was not hurt, they came to *me*, and I was petted and forgiven. Major and Mrs. Travis have now a young family; when I go to see them I never forget to congratulate myself that

I MARRIED MY AUNT.



REVOLUTIONISM EXTRAORDINARY.

CHARACTERISED as my life has been by the commission of innumerable acts of consummate folly and indiscretion, it has been comparatively free, with one hideous exception, from those errors of judgment which spring from a too sanguine confidence in one's own far-sightedness and perspicuity. I have for many years secretly and unwillingly admitted to myself that I am a born fool; but it so happens that the good seed of humility thus candidly sown has not borne such fruit in the shape of caution and self-restraint as might fairly have been expected, or I myself could have wished. Yet I did, at any rate, flatter myself that I was acute enough to be able to steer with tolerable safety between the Scylla of diffidence and the Charybdis of arrogant self-confidence; although I was in my innermost bosom conscious of a very strong innate tendency (possibly connected with the doctrine of original sin) to rush alternately into both of those extremes. However, I kept on my course pretty steadily until the spring of the year 1867, when, in consequence of a rather too free perusal of the columns of the penny papers, working on a naturally excitable imagination, I conceived the extraordinary idea that the country was on the eve of a revolution. I suppose the events of the past twelve months, together with the very indigestible and mental pabulum I have above indicated, had the effect of deranging my intellectual inside (if I may so express myself), and giving me a temporary fit of moral jaundice, biliousness, "liver," or what not; anyhow, the conviction that it was all over with the British constitution, became so strong within me, that I could think and dream of nothing else. I pictured to myself the dreadful spectacle of Her Majesty being insolently ordered out of Windsor Castle by some blood-thirsty "citizen" or other, and chased down to the coast by a shrieking mob of Clerkenwell patriots; Westminster Abbey turned into a Jacobin Club; a National Convocation in the House of Peers; the guillotine working away like fire and fury in Trafalgar-square; and Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity everywhere gorily triumphant. It is impossible to conceive how morbidly I dwelt on the

terrific details ; still, I was always conscious of there being a sort of incongruous absurdity all the time, in consequence, I imagine, of the broadly farcical vein which ran so persistently through the then prevailing Reform Agitation. Although I looked on the said agitation and the circumstances connected therewith, as the main germ of my coming revolution ; yet, I never could persuade myself that the men who headed it could, by any possibility, be the future Robespierres, Marats, and Dantons of the situation. Even supposing that that was the object they had in view, I considered they had monstrously misconceived those characters in an artistic point of view, and had ruined their reputations as theoretical revolutionists by making the comic element so very prominent a feature in their assumption of the important parts. The effect of all their inflammatory speeches was completely spoilt, in my opinion, by this incorrigible tendency.

Take for instance Mr. Beales, M.A. (and I fancy this same "M.A." would not have been a bad kind of joke on Mr. B.'s part if it had been a little better timed, and he had not insisted in letting it off so often). Well, Mr. Beales, though having much of the stuff in him for a good fancy republican, quite marred the effect of his harangues, by foolishly giving them the style of the late Mr. Grimaldi, which naturally diverted his hearers' minds from the serious subjects he was discussing to such trivial topics as "Hot Codlins" and the like. There was Colonel Dickson, again ("Colonel" you see—devilish good ! but singularly inappropriate). Now his was quite a cave of talents, of no mean order, utterly wasted. This man set the pernicious fashion of facetiously riding cab-horses, as far gone in spavins as could be procured for love or money, on all occasions of really solemn interest, and the jest was so singularly tickling by its studied refinement, that all the principal Reform Leaguers followed suit with one accord ; and I am told that no less than eight knackers retired on handsome fortunes within three months, all in consequence of this most unseemly fooling. Mr. Bradlaugh's imitations of Mr. Toole's school of drollery would have been admirable, had they been confined to their proper sphere ; but taken in connection with theological doctrines of a somewhat advanced character, they appeared to me exceedingly ill-advised. I pass over the series of lectures given by Mr. Leicester, on the subject of hump-backs (which I presume he had studied with a view to the idealistic assumption of the character of

Marat), the foolish practical joke of holding a judge and jury club meeting at the Home Office, and other similar escapades, amusing enough in their way, but altogether out of character. Suffice it to say that, seeing all this idiotic horse-play going on, and feeling certain that I must go on with the tide, I determined to take advantage of the opportunity, and by a rigid course of training for the profession of a practical and scientific revolutionist, be ready, when the smash came, to drop "slick" into the front rank, and show these mistaken men how completely they had been overreached by a little calculation and industry. Here was the fatal error, you see, my dear reader. I never suspected that these fellows were really only having a lark all the while, for its own sake, without any ulterior object. I thought they were all in earnest in the main, but were only occasionally carried away by the exuberance of their animal spirits. I thought myself so preternaturally clever, to have grasped this great opportunity and cut them out, that I suppose the feelings of triumphant, inward self-satisfaction drowned all my little stock of caution, and drove me headlong to my ruin. You shall hear my dismal story.

I determined that my first step should be to master the rudiments of the science in the retirement of the closet. I imagined that at some of the second-rate popular book-sellers, I might possibly find some work of an elementary order, bearing some such name as "A Handy Book of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity; or, Sansculottism made Easy;" or, possibly, it might be, "Every Man his own Demagogue, a Book for Revolutionist Beginners;" but although I ransacked Leicester Square and all its purlieus, I failed to discover any work of the kind. So I contented myself with a cheap copy of Carlyle's "French Revolution," which was recommended to me as containing incidentally all that I should probably want to know, and as being likely to improve my style of English composition. This, with a few odd numbers of a periodical called "The National Reformer," (which, consistently enough, I discovered to be a comic journal, though of a rather strongly-flavoured order), I conveyed triumphantly home to my lodgings.

I confess I was disappointed in most of Mr. Carlyle's heroes. Marat was the best; but that character had been, as we have seen, engaged. "The sea-green, incorruptible Robespierre" was too natty in dress for my resources, too

clean for my prejudices, and, moreover, was, in fact, generally rather respectable than otherwise. It has since transpired that this character was also engaged (I suppose more particularly on account of its aforesaid cleanness and respectability) by a prominent member of the Home Office Judge-and-Jury Club, who, we learn, has openly assumed the name of "the incorruptible Finlen," and has donned "the green."

So I threw over Carlyle, and began to evolve an ideal revolutionist out of my internal consciousness of what it ought to be. My general receipt was as follows:—First, catch your Bethnal-green bully, and soak him well for five or six years in "our prime old Tom;" then take a Californian gold digger, and an American up-country newspaper editor—mix thoroughly—throw in a brace of Leicester Square refugees; season with raw spirits, idleness, cheap tobacco, long hair, and dirt—simmer gently in Clerkenwell for a couple of years, with occasional violent boilings over in Hyde Park, and when ready serve up red hot in Palace Yard.

I followed this receipt as closely as I could under the circumstances. I began on Sunday morning, by way of giving a thoroughly anti-religious tone to the experiment, which I deemed of the *first* importance. I had previously sold off the following articles of my personal property:—Imprimis, all my shirts, socks, collars (bar one), pocket handkerchiefs, and, indeed, all my linen, with the exception of one dickey of unpretending dimensions. Item—all my hats, except one fatigued, crooked-brimmed arrangement suggestive of the kennel. Item—one hair brush, one nail ditto, one tooth ditto, one shaving ditto, one hair comb, three razors, one strop, and two cakes of best mottled. (N.B.—This lot went for fivepence.) Item—one washing stand, basin, &c. Item—all my chairs (except one, rickety.) Item, lastly—a poker and shovel. (I retained the tongs to poke the fire and pull imaginary noses with.) With the money realised by the sale of these articles, I purchased a large clasp knife, a holly bludgeon stick, a scarlet flannel shirt and cap, Tom Paine's "Rights of Man," and a portrait of Carrier. With this stock-in-trade I fairly started as a practical and theoretical revolutionist on the Sunday in question.

I commenced well—by leaping out of bed with a stentorian "Damn," which nearly burst the door open. I then proceeded with a choice selection of oaths, to light my fire

with the aid of my pillow-case and part of the leg of the table. This done, I put on my trousers—not, however, without a serious qualm as to whether that proceeding was consistent with the doctrine of pure Sansculottism; but this objection I finally over-ruled, on reflecting that if I insisted in carrying out the principle in its integrity in the public streets, a bloody aristocracy might make a fuss about it—which would probably involve my being forced by the myrmidons of the law to discontinue for a time my revolutionary researches.

After a light refection, consisting of a pipe of shag tobacco and a tea-cup of gin, I devoted a good half-hour to practising scowls and mysterious eye-rollings in the looking-glass. To my great annoyance, however, I completely failed in my attempts to foam at the mouth; the only result of my repeated efforts to do so being of a very discouraging and inconvenient character indeed.

Having no soap to fall back upon, I gave the experiment up for the present, trusting that the desired accomplishment would come in time, and I comforted myself by walking restlessly with heavy strides up and down my room, ever and anon opening my clasp knife to test the sharpness of the edge. At this point, I heard somebody on the floor below distinctly call out “Now then, young fifty-stun up theer; how’s shoe-leather?” accompanied with much knocking on the ceiling with a broom-handle. This determined me to sally forth in quest of experience; and so giving the final artistic touches to my toilet, out I went. With rounded shoulders, eyes fixed on the ground, and my teeth clenched, I proceeded towards Hyde Park—merely stopping to hector round Grosvenor-square, with a remorseless smile on my ill-kempt visage, and a vicious slouch in my gait. I should have deemed this last pose a success had not a small impudent boy, loitering at the corner of the square, shouted after me, “That’s right, hold Sunday-best; tuck in yer tuppenny;” which, fatally suggestive as it was of leap-frog, had the effect of materially altering my carriage till I could hurriedly get round the corner; thence I went to the Park.

I found the Reformer’s tree occupied, and some Radical propagandist or other, as usual, convulsing a rather numerous and closely packed audience with a fund of delicate humour. I at once perceived the speech to be after the best manner of the great Vance, and though considerably enter-

tained by the spectacle, could not forbear lamenting to see good energies so woefully misdirected. It really appeared to amount to infatuation, this all-absorbing passion for the jocose, and it strikes me even now that if the gentlemen of the Reform Societies would only start a limited company for the wholesale production of representation of Christmas pantomimes, the thing would be a grand commercial success. Take for example, such a telling title as "Twaddle, Twaddle, little *Star*, or Harlequin Hodger and the Omnipotent Fairy of Adelphi Terrace." Oh! depend upon it it would go down. Aye! as clean as a Leaguer to the bottom of the poll.

Meanwhile, I had worked my way into the heart of the crowd, when I suddenly found my course obstructed by a broad agricultural-looking back,—a back of a description not ordinarily found at such gatherings,—a back suggestive of fat bacon, mangold-wurzel, and general prosperity,—a back that would rather die than let a fellow wriggle past it into a front place—

"As motionless as rocks that bide
The wrath of the advancing tide
That *Back* stood fast—"

It suddenly flashed across me that I somehow recognised it, but the idea was only momentary and passed off. I gave up all thoughts of passing the owner of the back, and planting my feet firmly on the ground, and allowing myself to become wedged tight against the fleshy bulwark in front, I prepared to make my first experiment in amateur sedition. Just to test my powers, I had determined to begin in a mysterious way, by exciting people's curiosity as to "who that morose taciturn-looking man with the bloodshot-eyes and repressed fever aspect" was. So, taking advantage of a pause in the noise around me, I whispered under my voice, three distinct times, the monosyllable "Blood." Strange to say it had not the smallest effect: I saw no appalled enquiring glance thrown at me, no fraternal paw stretched over the people's heads to grasp mine, dirtily expressive of tacit sympathy. No! no effect was produced, bad or good. The ponderous back in front moved not. I tried the word "Death" in the same way in a louder key; but as through inattention I unfortunately chose a moment for its utterance when the speaker had just demanded of his audience what reward Messrs. Beales and Co. deserved for

all their patriotic exertions—my interruption was, to say the least, not well received. Still the huge back before me remained undisturbed. However, I was in for it now, and I was determined to persevere. So, putting one hand to my mouth, the better to convey the sound, and flourishing my clasp knife in the other, I yelled out, with the whole force of my lungs, “Down with the tyrants.”

* * * * *

“Bob! my lad,” said my burly old uncle, as we sat enjoying our churchwarden-pipes and grog in the warm kitchen of his snug Somerset homestead last Christmas-eve. “Bob,” said my uncle, “I think we’ll make a man of ye yet. Ye come down here to larn farmin’ wi’ me, ’stead o’ loafin’ about in Lunnon spendin’ the little ye had to start ye, and muddlin’ your silly brains wi’ listnin’ to a lot o’ spoutin’ boobies, wot no-one don’t know good of and plenty know a deal o’ harm—why, I think your head’s gotten round again summut.”

“Uncle Job,” I replied, “if you hadn’t been on the spot when I made such a cursed fool of myself and got me out of the scrape and the hands of the police, blessed if I think it would have ever got round again.”

And Meg (that’s my uncle’s daughter and housekeeper, a pretty girl enough, too) comes bustling in to mix us our last glasses, and then and there we drink our nightly toast “The Queen, God bless her, and the County Members.”



OF A CHRYSANTHEMUM

(DECEASED).

Not know Ironmold of the Common Law Bar! You surprise me. To think he should be one of those whom *fama obscura recondit*! Why the man is making two thousand a year at the least! "The Law List?" Oh, somebody's borrowed mine—never mind it. I'll tell you all about him. He belongs to either the "Middle" or the "Inner," and goes the—the—Chir! now I've quite forgotten which Circuit he's on. "When was he called?" Well, I don't exactly rec—sometime before I was—as far as my memory serves me. However, he has now arrived at that stage of business when a fellow tosses his wig on with his back to the glass, wears inked bands, and forgets whether he is for the plaintiff or defendant. But "the other side" soon finds out which party Ironmold appears for, I can tell you!

He was against me only last week in a Breach of Promise, and pulled the defendant through by staving-in the end of my peroration—confound him! To be sure, the plaintiff's case was not a strong one (the broken engagement had been entered into after a two days' acquaintance-ship and a vinous pic-nic), but I summed up in a telling, temperate address to the jury, ending with what I hoped was a clinching quotation.

"Gentlemen," said I, emphatically, "is a solemn contract to be hastily broken because it may have been suddenly made? Remember, gentlemen,

" 'Love's not a flower that grows on the dull earth,
Springs by the calendar; must wait for sun,
For rain; matures by parts—must take its time
To stem, to leaf, to bud, to blow. It owns
A richer soil, and boasts a quicker seed!'"

For the life of me, I couldn't remember the rest, and had mislaid the bit of paper, so I repeated the last line effectively and sat down.

"Yes, gentlemen," continued Ironmold, as he rose, "it is like my learned friend's *assurance*, if I may say so—

" 'You look for it, and see it not; and lo!
E'en while you look, the peerless flower is up,
Consummate, in the birth!'"

I thought, at the time, that he had secured my lost scrap of paper, but since then I have been inclined to the belief that Ironmold has some lurking half-ounce of poetry in his composition. And in order to injure him in the estimation of his capital city clients, I will state the grounds of my opinion.

A number of the *Times*, dated November, 1860, contained an announcement to the effect that the chrysanthemums in the Temple Gardens were in full bloom. I believe that that annual statement conveys to the mind of the unbotanical and young public an indescribable idea of floral splendour. When I myself was illegal—that is to say, unconnected with the law—I used to imagine a very “Maud’s Garden” of exquisite blossom, as I read the seductive paragraph above-mentioned. Now-a-days, the phrase “Temple Chrysanthemums,” brings before me a piece of wintery ground adorned with dingy paper flowers, apparently part of a bankrupt’s stock.

Perhaps paper and dust have entered into my soul, and other dwellers in and by the Temple may have brighter fancies. Be it so; however, in November, ’60, my poor share of our divided clerk (viz., his *nose*—it’s wonderful how he scented out my sherry) entered the room of the Chambers at 7, Elm Court, where I sat newspaperising, and informed me, nasally, that three young ladies, whose cards he bore, wished to know if they might come in. Before I could accord the required permission, they came, urging more than my third of the slave into the room; but so much as belonged to other masters withdrew precipitately when the entrance was clear, and I commanded the rest of him to rush instantly to Tosser’s, across Fleet Street, and order luncheon for my invaders.

Sweet voices exclaimed “Chrysanthemums!” in quite a bunch of different keys. And alas! then I knew that *I* was not the attraction which had drawn down angels to the Temple. Whatever other books the place they came from might contain, it was clear that there were no Law Reports there, for my fair clientela pulled down “Fifteen Meeson and Welsby,” “The First Common Bench,” “Twenty-eight L. J.,” and “The History of the Exchequer,” before I’d time to drag chairs from the wall. However, three pairs of wee gloves were spoilt during the literary research, and so my visitants sat in pretty quiet, weeping over them until the arrival of luncheon.

Then we went out and down to the Gardens, and I received a lesson in the beautiful—was taught the meaning of *calyx*, and *stamen*, and *petal*, in return for which I made bad jokes all over the praise-sprinkled Chrysanthemums until the gardener became as rampant as the winged horse.

"But we did not come here merely to see the flowers," said Helen; "we came to see *you*."

"On very particular—" added Agnes.

"Important business," ended Carrie.

So we adjourned to No. 7 for a conference.

"Now, Willie—"

"Miss Agnes Lilla Montiford Fayre," interrupted I; "you will find my name endorsed on that document," handing her a brief (which I kept until its proper fee was paid), one that bore as many dates as a palm tree.

"I beg your pardon," she replied. "Ah! I see. Well, 'Mr. Scenique-One-Gua,' we want your professional advice. Helen here wishes to become a lawyer; please tell us how that result is to be attained; but remember she can't eat dinners as you did, because she's delicate—and there isn't time."

With a good deal of presence of mind and exertion, I hugged down the most imposing book in Chambers, "Bracton, De Legibus," and con—no, *in*-sulted it.

"You may become a lawyer in three ways:—

1.—By birth, *i.e.*, being born of legal parents.

2.—By mastication, as you seem aware.

3.—By marriage,—with a lawyer, of course."

They looked over my shoulder, but Bracton's Latin saved me from discovery.

"Miss Helen Kemble seems to have but one alternative, viz., Number 3; and if I could be of——"

"Come, now, Willie," said my two cousins, "we can't stop in your dusty old lumber rooms all afternoon." (This the reward of *luncheon de luxe*!) "The fact is, we are going to have some private theatricals at Forest Hill. Helen is to play Portia, and wants some lessons in elocution. You must teach her."

I swept aside the leather covered table, the reception chair, and the books, and made "Venice: a Court of Justice" instantly; caught my robe from the hat peg, flung it on to the shoulders of Helen, made Portia; snatched a paper knife, whetted it, and made Shylock.

"On what compulsion must I? Tell me that."

And the tenderly clear voice of the sweet, clever girl, taking up the cue, began—

“The quality of mercy is not strained—”

Oh! she *was* good; long past any instruction that I could give her—so famously good that I rushed out to Pump Court, where I knew a fellow was to be found hard reading, who had “taste,” and wrote dramatic “criticisms.” I brought him back to my chambers. Ironmold was nearly as dishevelled a being *then* as he is now. I introduced him; he took Shylock’s bond from me, and made notes on the back as we went through part of the trial scene before him. Without catching my enthusiasm (he is an impassive man—a lawyer of the *first* class—a lawyer *born*), without being ecstatic, as I, yet he evidently thought a good deal of Portia’s acting, gave her counsel, and “considered” several passages with her. We had an enjoyable discussion, all five of us, until a solicitous old coachman declined to keep the carriage waiting for his young mistresses any longer.

“I’m so much obliged to you for the pains you have taken with me, and your valuable advice, Mr Ironmold,” was the pretty speech of Helen, as they prepared to leave.

“But his fee? And my fees?” said I, “you won’t find gratuitous advice worth attending to.”

“You shall have,” said Agnes, graciously, “a chrys—”

“A kis—” I interpolated.

“No, sir. I said *chrys*—distinctly—anthemum each,” and she gave me one.

Helen gave her Counsel one too, timidly.

I placed mine reverently in my button hole. I don’t think old Practical Ironmold ever had a button hole; and I am certain he’d as soon have thought of wearing flowers as of coming up from the Derby with a doll in his hat!

He took the chrysanthemum and put it in a side pocket of his coat carelessly, as if it were a fee unworthily paid in coppers.

We helped the girls into the carriage, and it—and time went on.

I married Agnes Helen has not yet become a lawyer, by adopting Bracton’s third alternative. Carrie is going to marry a parson. I was up at a conference in Ironmold’s chambers only yesterday. When the attorney had talked

and left us, I sat upon the brief-strewn table, and swung my legs youthfully, as in days gone by. And, playing with the old grimed bronze inkstand, I idly lifted the lid of a little sarcophagus in the centre. Something other than dead pens rested there. I picked it out. "What's this?"

Ironmold looked up from a case he was poring over in "Ellis, Blackburn, & Ellis." "That?"—Possibly a reflection from the piece of tape he was chewing—but his face seemed tinged with *red*.

"Oh! that was my fee for the consultation in 'Shylock v. Antonio'—don't you remember?"

It was the corpse of a chrysanthemum.
Now I've ruined Ironmold, I hope.



TO BE LET.

TO BE LET, GRAY'S INN HALL.—This fine structure, once in considerable repute, and with which tradition has associated some names not unknown in History, is now To BE LET on easy terms.

Every accommodation can be afforded, and the servants of the Society of Gray's Inn are at the disposal of parties hiring the Hall.

SUITABLE FOR VOLUNTEERS (WHITECHAPEL CORPS
PREFERRED),

CHARITY SCHOOL FEASTS, AND MIDNIGHT MEETINGS.

NO OBJECTION TO THE BAND OF HOPE.

N.B. As, from the frequency of its use by such parties, the Hall had for some time required washing, the Benchers have recently expended a very large sum in effecting this desirable object. The Hall has now been completely re-decorated, and, it is hoped, may compete in its attractions with the recently renovated Assembly Rooms, Holborn, for communication with which it is most advantageously situated.

As it is Vacation Time, the body of members of the Inn have just now no control over the Benchers, and

AN ADMIRABLE OPPORTUNITY OFFERS.

ALSO, TOGETHER WITH THE ABOVE, or separately, the open space known as GRAY'S INN SQUARE.—This fine thoroughfare, whose pavement has now undergone restoration for the first time since the Conquest, is also to be treated for by private contract.

It has always been the pride of the Benchers of Gray's

Inn that, as the property they control is not their own, they have abstained from placing any unnecessary restrictions upon the free enjoyment by the public of the Society's estate. This holds particularly true of Gray's Inn Square, in which a corps of Volunteers, in no way particularly estimable, has been allowed to run riot for several years.

In anticipation of a stop being soon put to this use of the Square by pressure from those members of the Inn who, though of subordinate rank, are so impertinent as to possess an equal right with themselves to the funds of the Society, it is necessary to notify that the Benchers will be open to a new offer.

N.B. The gates shut *pro forma* in the evening in accordance with an old custom; but no censorious restrictions are imposed.

GRAY'S INN GARDENS;

THE PLACE TO SPEND A HAPPY DAY! !

All should see the verdant slopes, which the foot of the gardener has never profaned, the home of the untamed domestic cat, which fine creature may be seen and heard daily at the mere utterance of the Talismanic watchword "Tsmeat!"

This sequestered and unnoticed spot, originally laid out (it is understood) in exact imitation of the Desert of Troy, has also, in common with the subjects of the above announcements, and every other square, court, and place in Gray's Inn, been given into the use and occupation of the Fortieth Middlesex Volunteers.

For the reasons rendering this notification politic, see as last above.

MORAL. Hurrah for the coming Inns of Court Bill, which shall make the election of the Benchers depend on the Society they govern!

ANSWERS TO CHARADE AND ACROSTICS.

CHARADE.

1. Cow.
 2. Rage.
- Cou-rage.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

T	ailo	R
E	rat	O
N	ou	S
N	ew	S
Y	or	E
S	cot	T
O	rnamen	T
N	apol	I

TRIPLE ACROSTICS.

(1.)

1.	T	u	D	o	R
2.	O	b	E	s	E
3.	R	a	F	u	S
4.	I	c	E	n	I
5.	E	mbr	A	cin	G
6.	S	a	T	a	N

(2.)

1.	J	anu	A	riu	S
2.	O	w	L	e	T
3.	H	os	A	nn	A
4.	N	ew	B	ur	N
5.	S	t	A	e	L
6.	O	ur	M	us	E
7.	N		A		Y

(3.)

1.	H	am	B	ur	G
2.	E		A		R
3.	A		L		E
4.	D	a	D	d	Y



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